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Stepping Out of the Spotlight

We've spent a great deal of time in this space telling you that the D&D game is, first and foremost, about fun. It's a social experience you enjoy with your friends, or at the very least with people with whom you share this common interest. You get to use your imagination, engage in a shared storytelling experience, eat junk food, and tell lots of inappropriate jokes (maybe that last one's more my personal experience, but none of this is new to you if you've played).

Of course, it's easy to have fun in a D&D game when the attention is on you. Good DMs take opportunities to create adventures around a single character. And this is awesome. Whenever I'm in a campaign that does this, I feel more involved, more interested, and more immersed in the game and the action when my character is in the spotlight. In addition to your character leveling up through XP, your PC also gets to level up in personality as his or her personal issues are resolved (or not).

But what happens when your storyline concludes and the party moves on to pursue the agenda of another adventurer? After all, we can't always expect the DM's personal and undivided attention on our character's life story. This is a cooperative experience, and nearly every player should receive some of this attention.

When the focus inevitably shifts, how do you stay involved? This came up recently in our game. We'd just spent an adventure focusing on my character's backstory and reached a conclusion . . . of sorts (with Chris Perkins's game, there's rarely a true and final resolution to anything . . . but that's another editorial). Now we're off pursuing an adventure tied directly to Rodney Thompson's avenger.

I'll be the first to confess: I could feel my attention shifting gears as we made this transition. It's not like I was losing interest, hooking up my iPod mid-game and checking in just long enough to toss the odd d20. I knew the adventures would still continue to be fun and engaging. But I recognized that I was taking a back seat in the story. And you know what? It was a little tough to adapt.

Rather than get on my pity-potty (as my mom would say), I cowboyed up. I remembered that throughout the previous weeks, Rodney, and by extension, his character Vargas, had shown nothing but support as my character took center stage. I wanted to return that favor. I started to think about how Deimos, my PC, would react to his buddy being in need—just as I would try to do in the real world. When one of my friends needs a hand, I'm there to schlep a couch or give a ride to the airport.

So I've decided to make Rodney's quest my own. It's not that I want to steal his moments; far from it. But our characters are lifelong friends. It makes sense that Deimos would be intimately concerned with those things that his friend would focus on. I'm making his villains mine; I'm embracing his goals. And now, I find myself looking forward to each session as much as I did a few weeks back. I want to see how Vargas comes out of this, how he changes, and how Rodney plays those changes at the table.

Things came to a head last night, and Chris left us at a cliffhanger as Vargas must now make an incredibly difficult choice. (Chris will have more of that in his Io'mandra blog and wiki, so stay tuned there.) I can't wait for next week so I can see where Rodney wants to put his couch.

What about you? How do you deal with the spotlight being on individual players? Do you enjoy those opportunities when the light is on you? If you run a game, how do you make sure you split your attention among all the players equally? Or do some of your players prefer to avoid that attention? Send your comments and stories to dndinsider@wizards.com.

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Debut Content
Player's Handbook 3

The Monk

By Rob Heinsoo, Mike Mearls and Robert J. Schwab

Commentary by Stephen Schubert
illustrations by Amanda Sartor

We covered many of our thoughts about the design and development of the monk in *Dragon* #375's Design and Development article. In that article, we discuss why the monk uses the psionic power source, the concept and implementation of the full discipline power structure, and our thoughts at the time of the weapon-using monk and the flurry of blows mechanic.

With this debut content, these elements of the monk have been finalized. We incorporated playtest feedback, and continued to work on the monk internally to reach our final product. This debut article refreshes the playtest content, giving you the final, *Player's Handbook 3* version of the centered breath build of the monk class, with updated powers and paths.

MONK

"You fight well, but without discipline and focus, you will fall."

CLASS TRAITS

Role: Striker. You typically eschew weapons in favor of unarmed attacks, and you avoid armor in favor of maneuverability and agility. Few can match your speed and poise on the battlefield. Your powers are more than simple attacks; they are complex forms that allow you to strike and move with unmatched grace. You lean toward controller as a secondary role.
Power Source: Psionic. Your intense focus, constant training, and exceptional talent combine to allow you to harness the psionic power within yourself.
Key Abilities: Dexterity, Strength, Wisdom

Armor Proficiencies: Cloth
Weapon Proficiencies: Club, dagger, monk unarmed strike, quarterstaff, shuriken, sling, spear
Implements: Ki focuses, weapons with which you're proficient
Bonus to Defense: +1 Fortitude, +1 Reflex, +1 Will

Hit Points at 1st Level: 12 + Constitution score
Hit Points per Level Gained: 5
Healing Surges per Day: 7 + Constitution modifier

Trained Skills: From the class skills list below, choose four trained skills at 1st level.
Class Skills: Acrobatics (Dex), Athletics (Str), Diplomacy (Cha), Endurance (Con), Heal (Wis), Insight (Wis), Perception (Wis), Religion (Int), Stealth (Dex), Thievery (Dex)

Class Features: Monastic Tradition, Unarmed Combatant, Unarmored Defense

From high in forbidding mountains to the alleys of a city's meanest district, the ascetic warriors known as monks practice their art. By focusing on their minds and bodies, honing both to near perfection, they master a psionic fighting art that allows them to deliver a punch with the force of a giant's club and to absorb attacks as easily as a heavily armored knight. Monks tap into the psionic potential that rests within themselves, turning that energy further inward to fortify their bodies and sharpen their minds.

Perhaps you set out on this path to put a dark past behind you. Or your village was victimized one time too many by an evil lord or marauding beasts, and you now seek justice. No matter what your motivation, the path of the monk transforms you into a living weapon.

The road opens wide before you. With little more than a walking stick and perhaps a satchel of food, you are ready to take on whatever the world can throw at you. Your years of training taught you to turn your eye inward. Now it is time to look outward and test yourself against the world's dangers.

MONK OVERVIEW

Characteristics: You use powers that combine movement with powerful strikes, allowing you to dart in and out of battle without risking attack from your foes. Compared to other strikers, you are better at taking on small groups of enemies. You hit, move, and fade away before your enemies can respond.

Religion: Bahamut attracts monks who serve as champions of good. Other monks revere Kord, seeing in his battle prowess an example they can aspire to. Contemplative monks devote themselves to Ioun, seeking to hone their minds and bring their entire beings into balance. A few monks forgo devotion to the gods, preferring to find strength in rigorous adherence to their ascetic principles and the training needed to unlock their psionic powers.

Races: Humans are the most common monks and master a greater variety of fighting styles than monks of other races. Githzerai society is built around monastic communities, and many members of that race adopt the monk class. Elves are talented monks, since their awareness and agility are both useful tools in studying monastic disciplines.

Monk Class Features

Monks have the following class features.

Monastic Tradition

Monks train in a number of traditional techniques, with each monastery focusing on a specific style. You are part of the Centered Breath tradition, which grants you a flurry of blows power and a defensive benefit.

Centered Breath

The Centered Breath tradition focuses on honing your mental awareness to better harness psionic magic. This tradition teaches that only by controlling yourself can you control your environment. The tradition's adherents are typically ascetics, whose monasteries stand in quiet corners of the world where the monks can train and study without distraction. In some of these monasteries, speech is forbidden except for one hour each day.

Flurry of Blows: You gain the *centered flurry of blows* power.

Mental Equilibrium: You gain a +1 bonus to Fortitude. This bonus increases to +2 at 11th level and +3 at 21st level.

Unarmed Combatant

You can make unarmed attacks with much greater effectiveness than most combatants. When you make a weapon attack such as a melee basic attack, you can use the monk unarmed strike, which is a weapon in the unarmed weapon group. This weapon has the off-hand weapon property and a +3 proficiency bonus, and it deals 1d8 damage. You must have a hand free to use your monk unarmed strike, even if you're kicking, kneeing, elbowing, or head-butting a target. Also, your monk unarmed strike can benefit from a magic ki focus if you have one (see "Implements" below).

Unarmored Defense

While you are wearing cloth armor or no armor and aren't using a shield, you gain a +2 bonus to AC.

Implements

Monks usually channel their psionic energy through an item called a ki focus, which is a wooden practice weapon, prayer beads, a manual of lore, or some other object a monk studies or uses during training or meditation. After you attune yourself to a ki focus, you can use it as an implement when it is on your person (see the "Ki Focuses" sidebar).

When you wear or hold your ki focus, you can add its enhancement bonus to the attack rolls and the damage rolls of monk powers and monk paragon path powers that have the implement keyword. You can also add its enhancement bonus to the attack rolls and the damage rolls of weapon attacks you make using a weapon with which you're proficient.

You can also use a weapon with which you're proficient as an implement. When wielding the weapon as an implement, the weapon's characteristics—proficiency bonus, damage die, and weapon properties like defensive or high crit—are irrelevant to your implement powers.

If you have both a magic ki focus and a magic weapon, you choose before you use an attack power whether to draw on the magic of the ki focus or the weapon. Your choice determines which enhancement bonus, critical hit effects, and magic item properties and powers you can apply to that power. You can't, for example, use the enhancement bonus of your ki focus and the critical hit effect of your magic weapon with the same attack.

KI FOCUSES

A ki focus is an object that certain classes use as a focus for their inner magical energy, known as their ki. A ki focus might take the form of a training manual, a scroll of ancient secrets, or a blunt training weapon. To use a ki focus, you must first attune yourself to it. Some characters study their ki focus to attune themselves to it. Others meditate with it or wield it as they practice their fighting techniques. Once you have attuned yourself to a ki focus, you must either wear or hold it to use it as an implement.

When you attune yourself to a ki focus, you draw on magic within it to shape your ki. This attunement is temporary, fading away if you attune yourself to a different ki focus or if you die. The ki focus that you're attuned to occupies your ki focus item slot.

To attune yourself to a ki focus, you must have the item on your person during a short or an extended rest. Whenever you take a rest, you can attune yourself to a ki focus in your possession, but you can be attuned to only one ki focus at a time. Also, only one creature at a time can be attuned to a particular ki focus. Once you attune yourself to a ki focus, no one else can attune to it until you are no longer attuned to it.

If you can use a ki focus as an implement, you can add its enhancement bonus to the attack rolls and the damage rolls of implement powers from the class (and its associated paragon paths) that allows you to use a ki focus, and you can use its properties and powers. Otherwise, you gain no benefit from a ki focus.

Being able to use a ki focus as an implement means you can also use it with your weapon attacks. However, you must choose to use the enhancement bonus, properties, and powers of the ki focus, rather than the weapon you're wielding, or vice versa. You can't use both when you use a power.

COMMENTARY

Ki Focus

The biggest shift of the monk from the playtest version to our final version is that the monk now fully embraces his implement usage. His powers are now all implement powers, and his ki focus is his primary implement.

The class still allows for the monk to use weapons for his implement attacks, essentially allowing him to get the weapon's enhancement bonus and properties when he uses a magic weapon as an implement. But a monk with both a magic ki focus and a magic weapon would have to choose which one he uses with the attack.

We eliminated the text regarding enchanting your unarmed strike, instead emphasizing the ki focus implement in PH3. The monk retains the ability to use improved unarmed strike as a weapon, providing an avenue for monks to use a reasonable unarmed strike for multiclass weapon attacks.

The ki focus became a more fully realized magic item. The monk must spend time attuning to a ki focus, which then confers its magic to the monk for a short time. We'd explored some concepts such as consumable ki focuses and transferable ki focuses, but ultimately rejected them. By making these magic items in their own right, it allows us to provide magic ki focuses as treasure, and in a way that doesn't mess with the game's economy.

MONKS AND WEAPONS

Your monk attack powers are implement powers, meaning they are enhanced by the powers, properties, and enhancement bonus of your ki focus or a weapon you use as an implement. All your monk attacks can involve the use of a weapon, whether it's your monk unarmed strike or a manufactured object. Because the attacks can draw on the magic of your ki focus, they are equally effective whether you wield a quarterstaff or batter your foes with punches and kicks.

You might want to use a weapon so that you can take advantage of weapon-related feats. You can switch weapons with ease or pick up whatever is at hand to attack your foes, drawing on the power of your ki focus instead of relying on the strength of magically enhanced steel.

You might also want to carry a sling or some shuriken so that you can make ranged basic attacks.

Creating a Monk

You can make your monk however you like. The build here provides suggestions based on the Centered Breath monastic tradition. All monks use Dexterity for their attacks, and Wisdom increases the effect of attacks associated with the Centered Breath tradition.

Centered Breath Monk

You search for the flow of energy within yourself, the world, and each battle. Calmly anticipating your enemy's attacks, you move swiftly across the battlefield and excel at projecting your psionic energy outward to control your enemies and foil their plans. Dexterity should be your highest score, Wisdom should be your second, and Strength can be your third, since you will probably want to select a mix of powers that use Wisdom and Strength.

Suggested Class Feature: Centered Breath
Suggested Feat: Pointed Step Style
Suggested Skills: Acrobatics, Athletics, Insight, Perception
Suggested At-Will Powers: *dancing cobra*, *five storms*
Suggested Encounter Power: *drunken monkey*
Suggested Daily Power: *masterful spiral*

Monk Powers

Your monk powers are called disciplines. They rely on your physical training, mental focus, and mastery of psionic magic to function.

Full Discipline

Many monk powers have the full discipline keyword. A full discipline power gives you two or more actions to choose from, usually an attack technique and a movement technique. Attack techniques usually require a standard action, and movement techniques are options for your move actions. For a monk, a full discipline power represents a fighting style, a unique combination of a move and an attack.

You can use only one full discipline power per round unless you spend an action point. If you spend an action point to take an extra action, you can switch to a different full discipline power. You can use the techniques of a full discipline power in whatever order you like, and you can choose to use one of the techniques and not the other during a particular round.

The number of times you can use a full discipline power's techniques during a round is determined by the power's type—at-will or encounter—and by the actions you have available that round. For example, you can use the techniques of an at-will full discipline power as many times during a round as you like, provided you have enough of the required actions. If you use an encounter full discipline power, you can use both techniques, but can only use each technique once during that round.

Class Features

Monks gain a flurry of blows power based on their chosen tradition. Monks of the Centered Breath tradition gain *centered flurry of blows*.

COMMENTARY

Flurry of Blows

Flurry of Blows is the monk class's striker damage feature, like the rogue's Sneak Attack or warlock's Curse. Each flurry option has two degrees of effect when triggered, and the effect is incrementally better if used against a creature that wasn't hit by the triggering attack.

Of the two options in Player's Handbook 3, the centered flurry of blows provides more control, letting the monk slide his enemies around. The ability to slide an enemy without hitting them can be pretty powerful, and this is my favorite of the two available options. Of course, if straight-up damage is more to your liking, then you'll probably choose the stone fist flurry instead.

Feedback suggested that the playtest monk's flurry damage was too low. In addition, the playtest version of centered flurry only allowed the monk to slide a target if it wasn't a target of the triggering attack. We've made a couple changes to make it a better. First, we increased the damage by a couple of points (and a bit more on the stone fist flurry). Second, we made the slide integral to centered flurry, instead of only coming into play on a non-target of the triggering attack. With the new and improved centered flurry of blows, a target of the triggering attack can be slid to an adjacent square, and the other targets of the flurry can now be slid in any direction.

Flurry of Blows provides incentive for the monk to get in the middle of his enemies, especially at higher levels. We expect the monk's mobility to help get out of precarious situations, and the change to centered flurry now allows him to force one or more enemies away from him. Of course, we also expect teamwork to be a factor, letting the monk use a defender's mark to his advantage and to help guarantee a safe retreat.

Centered Flurry of Blows — Monk Feature

Your fists become a blur as you follow up your initial attack with another, shifting your foes' positions to your advantage.

At-Will ✦ Psionic
Free Action (Special) **Melee** 1
Trigger: You hit with an attack during your turn
Target: One creature
Level 11: One or two creatures
Level 21: Each enemy adjacent to you
Effect: The target takes damage equal to 2 + your Wisdom modifier, and you slide it 1 square to a square adjacent to you, or 1 square in any direction if the target wasn't targeted by the triggering attack.
Special: You can use this power only once per round.

Level 1 At-Will Disciplines

Crane's Wings — Monk Attack 1

You leap across the battlefield and kick your foe, sending it staggering backward.

At-Will ✦ Full Discipline, Implement, Psionic
Attack Technique
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity vs. Fortitude
Hit: 1d10 + Dexterity modifier damage, and you push the target 1 square.
Level 21: **2d10 + Dexterity modifier damage.**
Movement Technique
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You make an Athletics check to jump with a +5 power bonus. You are considered to have a running start, and the distance of the jump isn't limited by your speed.

Dancing Cobra — Monk Attack 1

You dodge and weave like a cobra, confounding your enemy and turning its attacks back against it.

At-Will ✦ Full Discipline, Implement, Psionic
Attack Technique
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex
Hit: 1d10 + Dexterity modifier damage. If the target has made an opportunity attack against you during this turn, the target takes extra damage equal to your Wisdom modifier.
Level 21: **2d10 + Dexterity modifier damage.**
Movement Technique
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You move your speed + 2.

Dragon's Tail — Monk Attack 1

Your hand lashes out like a dragon's tail, and with the lightest touch unleashes power that knocks your foe to the ground.

At-Will ✦ Full Discipline, Implement, Psionic
Attack Technique
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity vs. Fortitude
Hit: 1d6 + Dexterity modifier damage, and you knock the target prone.
Level 21: **2d6 + Dexterity modifier damage.**
Movement Technique
Move Action **Melee** 1
Target: One ally or one prone enemy
Effect: You swap places with the target.

Five Storms — Monk Attack 1

You move like a whirlwind, spinning as you unleash an array of kicks and punches, which slam into your foes like a storm crashing onto the shore.

At-Will ✦ Full Discipline, Implement, Psionic
Attack Technique
Standard Action **Close** burst 1
Target: Each enemy you can see in burst
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex
Hit: 1d8 + Dexterity modifier damage.
Level 21: 2d8 + Dexterity modifier damage.
Movement Technique
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You shift 2 squares.

Level 1 Encounter Disciplines

Drunken Monkey — Monk Attack 1

You lurch seemingly out of control. Your enemies are bewildered as they try to hit your swaying form, and with a cunning jab, you cause one of your foes to attack its companion.

Encounter ✦ Full Discipline, Implement, Psionic
Attack Technique
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One enemy
Attack: Dexterity vs. Will
Hit: 1d8 + Dexterity modifier damage, and you slide the target 1 square. The target then makes a melee basic attack as a free action against one enemy of your choice. The target gains a bonus to the attack roll equal to your Wisdom modifier.
Movement Technique
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You move your speed + 2. During this movement, you ignore difficult terrain and gain a power bonus to all defenses against opportunity attacks. The bonus equals your Wisdom modifier.

Open the Gate of Battle — Monk Attack 1

Your sudden movement catches your foe unprepared, and you launch into your attack.

Encounter ✦ Full Discipline, Implement, Psionic
Attack Technique
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d10 + Dexterity modifier damage. The target takes 1d10 extra damage if it was at full hit points when you hit it with this attack.
Movement Technique
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You move your speed + 2. During this movement, you don't provoke opportunity attacks from the first enemy you move away from.

Level 1 Daily Disciplines

Masterful Spiral — Monk Attack 1

With a sudden burst of motion, you deliver crushing kicks and punches of psionic force to nearby enemies.

Daily ✦ Force, Implement, Psionic, Stance
Standard Action **Close** burst 2
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex
Hit: 3d8 + Dexterity modifier force damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: You can assume the spiral stance. Until the stance ends, your reach with melee touch attacks increases by 1.

Whirling Mantis Step — Monk Attack 1

With swift steps and overwhelming leverage, you shove aside your foes and cripple them with vicious kicks.

Daily ✦ Implement, Psionic
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Effect: You shift your speed. If you enter a square adjacent to any enemy during this shift, you slide that enemy 1 square. You can slide each enemy only once during the shift. After the shift, make the following attack.
Target: One, two, or three creatures
Attack: Dexterity vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2d10 + Dexterity modifier damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).
Miss: Half damage, and the target is slowed until the end of your next turn.

Level 2 Utility Disciplines

Grasp the Wind — Monk Utility 2

Before your enemy can force you back, you whirl around, using the power of its attack to propel you where you want to go.

Encounter ✦ Psionic
Immediate Interrupt **Personal**
Trigger: You are pulled, pushed, or slid
Effect: Instead of being affected by the forced movement, you shift the number of squares it would have moved you.

Harmonious Discipline — Monk Utility 2

A specific sequence of disciplined breathing enhances both your defense and your offense.

Encounter ✦ Psionic
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: You gain temporary hit points equal to your Wisdom modifier. When you have no temporary hit points remaining, you gain a bonus to the damage roll of your next melee attack before the end of your next turn. The bonus equals your Wisdom modifier.

Level 3 Encounter Disciplines

Dance of Swords — Monk Attack 3

As your foes swarm around you, you leap among them and turn their numbers against them.

Encounter ✦ Full Discipline, Implement, Psionic
Attack Technique
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d8 + Dexterity modifier damage, and the target takes extra damage equal to twice the number of enemies adjacent to you.
Movement Technique
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You move your speed + 2. If any enemies make opportunity attacks against you during this movement and miss, you gain combat advantage against the enemies that missed until the end of your turn.

Twin Thunders — Monk Attack 3

You move in a blur, tumbling around a foe, and deliver a sweeping kick with such ferocity that thunderous energy blasts both that foe and its cohort.

Encounter ✦ Full Discipline, Implement, Psionic, Thunder
Attack Technique
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2d10 + Dexterity modifier thunder damage, and a single enemy adjacent to the target takes 1d10 thunder damage.
Movement Technique
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: Choose one enemy adjacent to you and move your speed + 2. During this movement, you don't provoke opportunity attacks from that enemy.

COMMENTARY
Powers
The monk's Weapon powers were converted to implement attacks, in most places replacing each W with 1d10. We also reevaluated the monk's damage and gave him a boost in many powers. The monk is a striker, after all.

Level 5 Daily Disciplines

Deadly Cobra Strike — Monk Attack 5

You weave from side to side and lash your hand forth like a striking cobra, leaving behind psionically poisoned wounds.

Daily ✦ Implement, Poison, Psionic
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2d10 + Dexterity modifier damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).
Miss: Half damage.

One Hundred Leaves — Monk Attack 5

You launch a flurry of attacks, striking with such speed and might that creatures scatter before you like leaves in a hurricane.

Daily ✦ Implement, Psionic
Standard Action **Close** blast 3
Target: Each creature in blast
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex
Hit: 3d8 + Dexterity modifier damage, and you push the target 2 squares.
Miss: Half damage, and you push the target 1 square.
Effect: Until the end of your next turn, you can target one additional creature in range with your flurry of blows power.

Level 6 Utility Disciplines

Centered Defense — Monk Utility 6

You breathe deeply. With your center strong, you calmly avoid enemy attacks.

Daily ✦ Psionic, Stance
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Until the stance ends, you gain a +2 power bonus to all defenses.

Purifying Meditation — Monk Utility 6

You focus your mind inward, finding the source of what ails you and driving it away.

Encounter ✦ Psionic
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: You make a saving throw with a bonus equal to your Wisdom modifier.

Level 7 Encounter Disciplines

Fist of One Hundred Strikes — Monk Attack 7

You move so quickly that you become a blur, as if a hundred copies of yourself suddenly sprang among your foes.

Encounter ✦ Full Discipline, Implement, Psionic
Attack Technique
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One or two creatures
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d6 + Dexterity modifier damage, and you shift 1 square.
Movement Technique
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You shift 2 squares.

Strike the Avalanche — Monk Attack 7

As your blow falls, you send your foe flying across the battlefield to slam into your enemies like an avalanche.

Encounter ✦ Full Discipline, Implement, Psionic
Attack Technique
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Primary Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Dexterity vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2d10 + Dexterity modifier damage, and you slide the primary target a number of squares equal to your Wisdom modifier. Make a secondary attack that is a close burst 1 centered on the primary target.
Secondary Target: Each creature in burst other than the primary target
Secondary Attack: Dexterity vs. Fortitude
Hit: The secondary target falls prone.
Movement Technique
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You move your speed + 2. During this movement, you don't provoke opportunity attacks from prone enemies.

Level 9 Daily Disciplines

Strength to Weakness — Monk Attack 9

You psionically perceive what your eyes cannot see: your foe's inner weakness. You lightly touch that foe. A moment later, the agony of your attack falls upon it.

Daily ✦ Implement, Psionic
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity vs. Fortitude or Reflex
Hit: Ongoing damage equal to 15 + your Dexterity modifier (save ends).
Miss: Ongoing 10 damage (save ends).

Twilight Touch — Monk Attack 9

You tap your fingers against your enemies' heads, disrupting the flow of energy through them and clouding their vision.

Daily ✦ Implement, Psionic, Psychic
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One, two, or three creatures
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex
Hit: 3d6 + Dexterity modifier psychic damage, and the target is blinded until the end of your next turn.
Miss: Half damage.

Level 10 Utility Disciplines

Iron Dragon Defense — Monk Utility 10

You quiet your mind and shrug off the pain inflicted upon you.

Encounter ✦ Psionic
Immediate Interrupt **Personal**
Trigger: You take damage
Effect: The damage is reduced by 10 + your Wisdom modifier.

Spider Technique — Monk Utility 10

The power of your mind turns walls and ceilings into floors for you.

At-Will ✦ Psionic
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You climb your speed. During this movement, you can move across overhanging surfaces, like ceilings, but you fall if you end your turn on such a surface.

Level 13 Encounter Disciplines

Dance of the Stinging Hornet — Monk Attack 13

You leap into the air and land on your foe's back. From there, you rain blows on it.

Encounter ✦ Full Discipline, Implement, Psionic
Attack Technique
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d10 + Dexterity modifier damage, and you grab the target. Until the grab ends, the target grants cover to you, and if it is larger than you, you can end a move action in its space. If you do so, the target isn't immobilized by this grab, and you remain in its space when it moves (you don't provoke opportunity attacks as you move with it). Until you leave the target's space, its movement doesn't provoke opportunity attacks from you.
Movement Technique
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You make an Athletics check to jump with a +5 power bonus. You are considered to have a running start. You can use the attack technique at any point during this movement.

Overpowering Strike — Monk Attack 13

You focus psionic energy into a single strike so powerful that your foe has trouble striking back.

Encounter ✦ Full Discipline, Implement, Psionic
Attack Technique
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity vs. Will
Hit: 3d10 + Dexterity modifier damage. Until the end of your next turn, the target takes a penalty to attack rolls against you equal to your Wisdom modifier.
Movement Technique
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You shift 3 squares.

Level 15 Daily Disciplines

Ring the Golden Bell — Monk Attack 15

You leap up and punch at the air, causing a shimmering bolt of force to arc across the battlefield. You follow the bolt, landing at its point of impact.

Daily ✦ Force, Implement, Psionic
Standard Action **Close** burst 1
Effect: Before the attack, you jump 10 squares. This movement doesn't provoke opportunity attacks.
Target: Each creature in burst
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex
Hit: 4d6 + Dexterity modifier force damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).
Miss: Half damage, and the target is dazed until the end of your next turn.

Way of the Autumn Wind — Monk Attack 15

You spring into the air and perform a roundhouse kick, creating a bitter draft. You dance on the wind as it washes over your foes, draining their strength.

Daily ✦ Cold, Implement, Psionic, Stance
Standard Action **Close** burst 2
Target: Each creature in burst
Attack: Dexterity vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2d6 + Dexterity modifier cold damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).
Miss: Half damage, and the target is weakened until the end of your next turn.
Effect: You can assume the autumn wind stance. Until the stance ends, you can shift 2 squares as an immediate reaction when you are hit by any attack.

Level 16 Utility Disciplines

Diamond Mind — Monk Utility 16

Your disciplined mind repels an attack.

Encounter ✦ Psionic
Immediate Interrupt **Personal**
Trigger: An attack hits your Will
Effect: You gain a +5 bonus to Will against the triggering attack.

Meditative Solace — Monk Utility 16

By focusing your mind, you banish your ills.

Daily ✦ Psionic, Stance
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Until the stance ends, once per round you can use a minor action to make a saving throw.

Level 17 Encounter Disciplines

Steps of Grasping Fire — Monk Attack 17

You become sheathed in flames and leave a trail of fire behind you with each step.

Encounter ✦ Fire, Full Discipline, Implement, Psionic
Attack Technique
Standard Action **Close** blast 3
Target: Each creature in blast
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d10 + Dexterity modifier fire damage.
Movement Technique
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You move your speed. During this movement, any enemy that hits you takes fire damage equal to 5 + your Wisdom modifier, and each square you leave is filled with fire until the end of your next turn. Any creature that enters a fire square or starts its turn there takes fire damage equal to 5 + your Wisdom modifier.

Three Winds Kick — Monk Attack 17

You move like a hurricane, dashing amid your enemies as you deliver a flurry of kicks.

Encounter ✦ Full Discipline, Implement, Psionic, Teleportation
Attack Technique
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One, two, or three creatures
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex
Hit: 1d10 + Dexterity modifier + Wisdom modifier damage, and you shift 2 squares.
Movement Technique
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: Choose one enemy within 6 squares of you. You teleport to a square adjacent to that enemy.

Level 19 Daily Disciplines

Inevitable Fist — Monk Attack 19

You strike at your foe. No matter how it tries to dodge your attack, it cannot escape.

Daily ✦ Implement, Psionic, Stance
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity + 2 vs. Reflex
Hit: 3d10 + Dexterity modifier damage.
Miss: 2d10 + Dexterity modifier damage.
Effect: You can assume the stance of the inevitable fist. Until the stance ends, your flurry of blows power deals 2 extra damage.

Rising Dragon Fire — Monk Attack 19

You exhale an inferno to burn your enemies.

Daily ✦ Fire, Implement, Psionic, Zone
Standard Action **Close** burst 2
Target: Each creature in burst
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex
Hit: 5d6 + Dexterity modifier fire damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of your next turn. When you hit any creature that is within the zone, that creature takes 2d6 extra fire damage.
Sustain Minor: The zone persists.

Level 22 Utility Disciplines

Diamond Body — Monk Utility 22

Your incredible speed and resilience, born from your mastery of psionic magic, allow you to shrug off a deadly attack.

Encounter ✦ Psionic
Immediate Interrupt **Personal**
Trigger: You are hit by an attack
Effect: You gain resist 20 to all damage against the triggering attack.

Mist Walker's Step — Monk Utility 22

With the proper focus of your psionic power, even physical obstacles are no match for you.

Encounter ✦ Psionic
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: You are phasing and ignore difficult terrain until the end of your next turn.

Level 23 Encounter Disciplines

Fist of Golden Light — Monk Attack 23

Focusing your psionic energy, you transform your fist into a brand of radiance.

Encounter ✦ Full Discipline, Implement, Psionic, Radiant
Attack Technique
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Primary Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Dexterity vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2d10 + Dexterity modifier radiant damage. Make a secondary attack that is a close burst 1 centered on the primary target.
Secondary Target: Each enemy in burst
Secondary Attack: Dexterity vs. Fortitude
Hit: The secondary target is blinded until the end of your next turn.
Movement Technique
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You move your speed + 4.

Hungry Ghost — Monk Attack 23

You transform into a spectral version of yourself, and your strike gives you vitality.

Encounter ✦ Full Discipline, Implement, Necrotic, Psionic
Attack Technique
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex
Hit: 3d10 + Dexterity modifier necrotic damage. You gain temporary hit points equal to 10 + your Wisdom modifier.
Movement Technique
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You are phasing and insubstantial until the end of your turn, and you move your speed.

Level 25 Daily Disciplines

Wandering Comet Strike — Monk Attack 25

You deliver a crushing blow to one foe, focus your psionic energy to step between the worlds, and repeat this attack again.

Daily ✦ Implement, Psionic, Teleportation
Standard Action **Melee** 1
Target: One, two, or three enemies
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex. If you attack fewer than three enemies, you can make the attack twice against one of the targets.
Hit: 3d10 + Dexterity modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: After attacking a target with this power, you teleport to a square adjacent to a different enemy within 10 squares of you.

Watchful Hydra Stance — Monk Attack 25

You make a series of quick attacks against enemies around you and assume a vigilant stance against them all.

Daily ✦ Implement, Psionic, Stance
Standard Action **Close** burst 3
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex
Hit: 6d6 + Dexterity modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: You can assume the watchful hydra stance. Until the stance ends, you can target an additional creature within 3 squares of you with your flurry of blows power.

Level 27 Encounter Disciplines

Celestial Drunken Boxer — Monk Attack 27

You shudder and stumble, yet there is a method to your madness. Each move is perfectly timed to mislead your enemies, causing them to attack each other.

Encounter ✦ Full Discipline, Implement, Psionic
Attack Technique
Standard Action **Close** burst 2
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Dexterity vs. Will
Hit: The target makes a melee basic attack as a free action against one enemy of your choice. The target gains a bonus to the attack roll and the damage roll against that enemy. The bonus equals your Wisdom modifier
Movement Technique
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You shift 4 squares.

Tap the Life Well — Monk Attack 27

Psionic energy flows through you, whisking you through space and disrupting your enemies' life force.

Encounter ✦ Full Discipline, Implement, Psionic, Teleportation
Attack Technique
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Primary Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Dexterity vs. Fortitude
Hit: 3d10 + Dexterity modifier damage. You teleport to a square adjacent to an enemy within 6 squares of you. Then make a secondary attack.
Secondary Target: One enemy other than the primary target
Secondary Attack: Dexterity vs. Fortitude
Hit: The primary and secondary targets are dazed until the end of your next turn.
Movement Technique
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You teleport to a square adjacent to an enemy within 6 squares of you.

Level 29 Daily Disciplines

Mist on the Storm — Monk Attack 29

You transform into a ghostly figure and walk among your foes, your fists and feet passing through their armor like mist.

Daily ✦ Implement, Psionic, Stance
Standard Action **Close** blast 3
Target: Each enemy in blast
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex
Hit: 7d6 + Dexterity modifier damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).
Miss: Half damage, and the target is weakened until the end of your next turn.
Effect: You can assume the misty storm stance. Until the stance ends, you are phasing. When you are hit by an attack, as an immediate interrupt you can become insubstantial until the end of your next turn, and the stance ends.

Quivering Palm — Monk Attack 29

Your vicious blow causes supernatural agony to your foe. Slowly but surely, its life slips away.

Daily ✦ Implement, Psionic
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex
Hit: 5d10 + Dexterity modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: The target takes ongoing 10 damage (save ends).
Each Failed Saving Throw: The ongoing damage increases by 5.

Paragon Paths

Ghostwalker

"I watch the souls as they depart this world for the next."

Prerequisite: Monk

The Monastery of the Eternal Void stands at a crossroads where the Shadowfell washes against the world's shores. Some who study in the monastery delve into the Shadowfell's secrets, but most of the disciples there contemplate the nature of life and death, the soul's final migration, and the fate awaiting creatures in the afterlife. Proximity to the darkened plane informed the monastery's fighting techniques as they developed into their current forms.

Your training at the monastery opened your inner eye, allowing you glimpses from this world into the realm of the dead. Those visions left a mark on you; your flesh grew pale and dark circles ring your eyes, as if death's touch draws near. Despite these changes, you are no less vital and have gained uncanny insight into the nature of souls and their movements.

As a ghostwalker, you use psionic power to cloak yourself in shadow and thereby avoid enemy attacks. You can also strike at a foe's life force, sapping its strength. Mastery of these techniques allows you to seize your enemy's soul and ride it to another location.

Ghostwalker Path Features

Ghostwalker's Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to make an attack, any enemy granting combat advantage to you that is hit by that attack is weakened until the end of your next turn.

Of Two Worlds (11th level): You have concealment against any enemy granting combat advantage to you. In addition, when any enemy misses you with a melee attack while you have concealment or total concealment, you can shift 1 square as a free action.

Ride the Spirit (16th level): Whenever you reduce an enemy to 0 hit points, you can use a free action to teleport a number of squares equal to your Wisdom modifier. Until the end of your next turn, you have combat advantage against each enemy adjacent to you at the end of the teleportation.

Ghostwalker Disciplines

Tormented Spirit — **Ghostwalker Attack 11**

Spirits whisk you and an enemy away, and you sap your foe's strength with your deadly touch.

Encounter ✦ Full Discipline, Implement, Necrotic, Psionic, Teleportation
Attack Technique
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One enemy granting combat advantage to you
Attack: Dexterity vs. Fortitude
Hit: 3d6 + Dexterity modifier necrotic damage, and the target is weakened until the end of your next turn.
Movement Technique
Move Action **Melee** 1
Target: One enemy
Effect: You teleport yourself and the target 5 squares to squares adjacent to each other. The target grants combat advantage to you until the end of your next turn.

Soul Dance — **Ghostwalker Utility 12**

Your form wavers, and in a blink of an eye, you are somewhere else.

Daily ✦ Psionic, Stance, Teleportation
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Until the stance ends, you have concealment. When any enemy misses you with a melee attack, you can use a free action to teleport to a square adjacent to that enemy and gain combat advantage against it until the end of your next turn.

Vengeful Ghost — **Ghostwalker Attack 20**

You strike your opponent with such force that you rattle its soul. You teleport away, leaving it vengeful.

Daily ✦ Implement, Psionic, Teleportation
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One enemy granting combat advantage to you
Attack: Dexterity vs. Will
Hit: 2d10 + Dexterity modifier damage, and the target is stunned (save ends).
Aftereffect: The target is dazed until it hits you with a melee attack or until it takes damage.
Miss: Half damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).
Effect: You teleport 5 squares.

Radiant Fist

"My power comes from within, and I wield it in the name of the gods."

Prerequisite: Monk, trained in Religion

You studied in a monastery devoted to the gods, guiding your mastery of psionic magic with the discipline and study of your faith. You likely worship Pelor or Bahamut, but most non-evil deities have at least one monastery dedicated to the fighting arts.

Your monk abilities are touched by divine power, allowing you to channel radiant energy and tap into the astral realm. Like other monks, you move with incredible speed and hit with unmatched power. In addition, the gods provide you with the ability to quash those who follow the gods of evil.

Dwarf monks are frequently drawn to this paragon path, since their piety and endurance allow them to withstand the mental and physical demands placed on a radiant fist.

Radiant Fist Path Features

Channel Divinity (11th level): You gain the Channel Divinity class feature, which means you can use a single Channel Divinity power once per encounter. You also gain a divinity feat of your choice.

Radiant Fist's Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action, you regain 15 hit points. Until the end of your next turn, your attacks deal extra radiant damage equal to your Wisdom modifier.

Radiant Hammer Fists (16th level): Whenever your flurry of blows power deals damage, you can make that damage radiant, instead of any other damage type. In addition, whenever you score a critical hit with a monk power or a radiant fist power, each enemy adjacent to you is blinded until the end of your next turn.

Radiant Fist Disciplines

Divine Sun **Radiant Fist Attack 11**

Radiance surrounds you as you teleport yourself and a friend across the battlefield and sear through your enemy's defenses.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Full Discipline, Implement, Psionic, Radiant, Teleportation

Attack Technique
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity vs. Will
Hit: 3d6 + Dexterity modifier radiant damage, and the target gains vulnerable 5 radiant until the end of your next turn.

Movement Technique
Move Action **Melee** 1
Target: One ally
Effect: You teleport yourself and the target a number of squares equal to your speed + 2 to squares adjacent to each other.

Undimmed Sun **Radiant Fist Utility 12**

Just as you begin to feel the weight of your wounds, you stand defiant as the gods heal you.

Daily ✦ Divine, Healing, Psionic
Minor Action **Personal**
Requirement: You must be bloodied.
Effect: You regain hit points as if you had spent a healing surge. Until the end of the encounter, you gain resistance to all damage equal to your Wisdom modifier.

Blinding Sun Technique **Radiant Fist Attack 20**

You utter a prayer as the psionic energy within you flows into your attacks. With each strike, the divine radiance that burns within you grows stronger.

Daily ✦ Divine, Implement, Psionic, Radiant
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex
Hit: 3d10 + Dexterity modifier radiant damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, you gain a +4 power bonus to damage rolls, and you can score a critical hit with monk powers and radiant fist powers on a roll of 19-20. When you score a critical hit with such powers, the target of the critical hit is blinded (save ends).

Feat

Pointed Step Style

Prerequisite: Monk, Flurry of Blows class feature

Benefit: When your flurry of blows power is triggered by an attack that you make with a spear, one target of that power can be up to 2 squares away from you.

COMMENTARY
Feat
We still think that weapon-wielding monks might be interesting for players. One way we'll address that niche is through feats like this one, which might change the way the monk attacks when using a specific weapon or type of weapon.

The Foundling

A Short Story by Mike Resnick

Illustration by Howard Lyon

Charybole was twenty-two years, three months, and six days old when she heard the screams.

She had been grieving, not just recently but for most of her life. A githzerai, her father had been killed by the githyanki when she was seven years old. Her mother had died beneath the awesome gaze of a cyclopean beholder two years later, her body literally melted before the glare of its single eye. Somehow she had survived to adulthood, living on the southern fringes of the Nentir Vale. In the fullness of time she had produced a daughter, a tiny thing on which she lavished all of the pent-up love and attention for which she had never found a recipient.

When her daughter was still an unnamed infant in her arms, she laid her down on the ground, just for a moment, while she filled a gourd full of water with which to bathe her from a nearby stream. She heard the screams a moment later, but arrived too late. An immature but still heavily armored bulette, that half-snake, half-monster lizard that dwells and travels beneath the surface of the ground, had sensed the infant's presence and broken through the surface, where it was tearing her child to shreds. She threw herself on the creature fearlessly, but its heavy armor protected it, and after a moment there were no more shrieks from the child. When the bulette finished its grisly feast it turned its attention to the githzerai female who was flailing away at its back and head, and realizing her child was past saving, Charybole backed away. The bulette stared coldly at her for a moment, as if deciding whether she was worth the effort, concluded she wasn't, and disappeared back down its subterranean burrow.

Charybole left the few remains of her child where they were, thereby guaranteeing that some scavenger or other would chance upon them and develop a taste for githzerai flesh. It made no difference to her. Every single thing she had cared about was dead, and she hoped to join them soon, to see if the next life held more joy and promise than this one.

Yet the same instinct that makes even a prey animal sell its life as dearly as possible kept her alive, made her go through the motions of living, of eating, of sleeping, so that she could live and eat and sleep through another purposeless day. This continued, day in and day out, week in and month out–

–Until the day she heard the wails and discovered a new purpose in life.

It was certainly not one she had anticipated, nor was it one she had prepared for. Had anyone mentioned what she was about to do a year ago, she would have thought they were crazy. But a year ago she had not seen a bulette rip her infant daughter limb from limb.

The cries came from a baby. Curious but cautious, she gingerly approached the source of the sound, and found it lying in the grass. At first it looked like a githzerai infant, but then she saw the yellow tint to its skin, and

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knew it was githyanki. She looked around for its mother, but there was no one to be seen.

They were near a stream, and she wandered over to it to see if the mother was washing herself off in the cool, rapidly flowing water. There was no one there . . . but then she saw a single blood-soaked sandal, and she knew what had happened. It was a warm day. The mother had set her baby down in the tall grasses for just a moment while she went to the stream to rinse the sweat from her body. Clearly she had not seen an approaching crocodile as the beast glided toward her beneath the surface, possibly had not known that the local streams were filled with them, and one bite would have been all it would have taken. Most of the local crocs were fourteen to eighteen feet in length, weighing well over a ton, and she'd have been dead, probably bitten in half, before she knew what hit her.

Charybole's reconstruction of the tragedy was interrupted by increased screaming from the child. She walked over and looked down at it. She had just lost her own baby to a bulette. She knew if she left this one here for more than a few minutes, it would suffer the same fate—or worse, for hideous as it was, the bulette was far from the top of the food chain. It wasn't its fault that it was born of the githyanki. It needed care, and love, and shelter, and she had all three to give. Finally she picked it up and walked off with it, all but daring any of the creatures of the Witchlight Fens to try to take it from her.

She arrived home, still clutching the baby boy. She fed him, and when she went to sleep at night she did so with her arms wrapped around the little foundling.

Came morning the baby cried again, and this time it attracted not predators, but other githzerai, neighbors who knew that Charybole had lost her infant the week before.

"This is a dangerous idea," said Baryomis, her closest friend, after examining the infant. "You cannot bring a githyanki to live with us."

"I could not leave it to be torn apart as my own baby was torn apart," responded Charybole.

"Why not?" shot back Baryomis. "When Zat finds out, she will kill it anyway, or order it killed."

"He has harmed no one," said Charybole, "and I will not allow harm to come to him."

"It is *githyanki!*" snapped Baryomis in frustration.

"*He* is helpless, and he needs me," replied Charybole, holding the baby even closer to her.

* * * * *

It didn't take long for word of the foundling to reach Zat. It seemed so unlikely for a githzerai to have anything to do with a githyanki, let alone adopt it, that she decided to see what was transpiring with her own eyes, so she made the pilgrimage out to the Witchlight Fens.

"Where is the aberration I have heard about?" she demanded, and while Charybole inspired friendship among those who knew her, Zat inspired awe and even fear among them, and those were strong emotions, more than strong enough to overcome their loyalty to the young githzerai. Finally Zat got her answer, sought out and confronted Charybole, and demanded to see the foundling.

"What will you do with him?" asked Charybole.

"It is my sacred task to protect the well-being of the githzerai," answered Zat. "If the baby is what I believe it to be, I will kill it, of course."

"If you do," replied Charybole with no show of fear, "*I* will kill *you*."

"Githzerai do not speak thus to me," said Zat.

"No one speaks thus to me about my child," shot back Charybole.

"It is *not* your child," insisted Zat.

"He is now."

Zat frowned. "Do you not understand? We cannot allow a githyanki to live."

"He is an *infant*," protested Charybole. "If I raise him, he will grow up to be githzerai."

"It will grow up to be githyanki, and this I cannot permit. The githyanki are the enemies of our blood."

"All I know about his blood is that it is red," said Charybole. "And if you spill it, then I will spill yours."

Zat stared at her. "You will not let me see it?"

"I will not."

"Nor slay it if it is indeed githyanki?"

"Nor slay it."

"You have made your decision," said Zat. "Now I must make mine." And she turned and began walking back through the series of portals to the Elemental Chaos and the genasi-ruled city of Threshold, where she held court.

* * * * *

Charybole saw the way the others looked at her and the infant, and she moved farther into the Witchlight Fens. She carved a spear for herself, and was never without it. She didn't know how Zat planned to strike at her adopted child, but there was never any doubt in her mind that sooner or later, probably when she least expected it, Zat or her agents *would* strike.

Two months passed peacefully, then three, then four. Each day she carried the infant out into the fresh air, each day she fed and cleaned him, and each day they bonded more and more closely. She named him Malargoten after a cousin who'd died fighting a mind flayer,

and she lavished all the love and attention upon him that would have gone to her own child had she lived.

And when she had kept the foundling for six months, and she no longer saw horrors and potential death in every shadow, she was visited by just the kind of horror she had once anticipated.

She was sitting on the ground with Malargoten, who was learning to crawl, beside her when she heard the unholy high-pitched screech. She reached out, placed a restraining hand on Malargoten, picked up her spear with her other hand, looked for the source of the sound—and found it not twenty feet away from her. It had come from a bebilith, a huge, spiderlike creature straight from the Abyss, or perhaps some deranged fiend's nightmare, staring at the foundling with hate-filled red eyes. She knew instantly that it had come to do Zat's bidding, for there was no other reason for it to leave its demon-haunted domain.

She was frightened, for a bebilith, taller than the surrounding trees, is a terrifying thing to behold, but she got to her feet and stood between the spider and Malargoten, spear in hand, ready to defend the infant to the death.

And it will be to your *death,* a voice inside her head seemed to say.

"There are worse things than death," she replied with more conviction than she felt, and she planted her feet, ready to meet the bebilith's charge.

But it didn't charge. It seemed to know that she held a formidable weapon in her hand . . . and it was not there for her, but for the infant.

It began slowly circling to her left. She pivoted, always facing it. It moved to the right. She responded.
It charged directly at her, hissing and shrieking, only to stop just beyond the reach of her spear point. She glanced down to make sure Malargoten hadn't crawled in any direction, and kept her spear at the ready.

The bebilith feinted twice more with pincerlike appendages, and she knew it was studying her, analyzing her responses with more brainpower than any spider should possess. She, too, feinted an attack, then realized she'd made a mistake, for she'd shown the bebilith she was unwilling to move even a few feet away from the infant.

The bebilith approached once more, stopped when it was perhaps seven feet distant, took a quick step to the left, and when she turned to keep her weapon pointed at it, it spat out a jet of sizzling fluid, part fire, part web, that just missed hitting Malargoten.

"What was *that?*" muttered Charybole.

You have heard of the ties that bind? said the voice in her head, a voice she knew belonged to Zat, though it sounded nothing like her. *This is the glue that binds. Once it touches the githyanki, once it binds its hands together, binds it to the rock-hard surface of the ground, nothing will ever unbind it—and it will burn where it lays.*

Charybole knew she couldn't wait any longer, couldn't chance that noxious fluid touching the baby, and with a scream she raced toward the bebilith, prepared to trade her life for its. She didn't bother to feint, didn't attempt to protect herself, didn't waste a single motion or a single second. The bebilith hissed in fury and turned its full attention to her, its razor-sharp pincers reaching out to her, its obscene mouth dripping with vile-smelling venom.

* * * * *

She awoke as Malargoten lay against her shoulder, sleeping contentedly. She gently moved him a few inches away, sat up gingerly, and tried to remember what had happened.

The bebilith was sprawled on the ground three feet away, her wooden spear protruding from its eye, its hairy limbs curled in death, its massive body covered by the horrible liquid that passed for its blood.

She examined her arms, legs, torso. There were no wounds. She was sore, as if she'd been hurled to the ground in the bebilith's death throes, but beyond that she seemed very little the worse for wear.

Suddenly she remembered the webbing, and turned to examine Malargoten, but he was free of it.

Of course, she thought with a sense of relief. You couldn't have crawled over to me if you'd been hit with it.

She stood up, tested her limbs, and picked the infant up in her arms, holding him protectively, and turned her head toward distant Threshold.

"You have done your worst, Zat. My child and I are still alive, and your creature is dead. Let it end here."

And a silent voice was carried to her on the wind that came from Threshold, a voice that said, *It will end when the githyanki ends.*

* * * * *

If Charybole was sure of anything, it was that Zat did not make empty threats. She didn't know when the next attempt to kill Malargoten would take place, but she didn't waste any time before preparing for it. She created a bow, a quiver, and a large supply of arrows. Some she dipped in poison, some in other solutions to use against creatures that were immune to poison. She crafted a dagger and a battleaxe, and was never without them.

And one day, almost a year from when she had found Malargoten, a man appeared on the horizon—tall, tanned, heavily muscled, with a thick mane of wild black hair.

Humans didn't walk the Witchlight Fens alone, and she knew he must have been sent by Zat. As he began walking toward her, she placed an arrow in her bow, waited until he was a hundred yards distant, and loosed it, aiming it to hit the ground a few yards ahead of him.

"That's far enough," she said.

"You are Charybole?" he asked.

"I am."

"I mean you no harm," he said calmly. "My race and the githzerai share no animosities. We make no war upon one another. Put your weapon away."

"First tell me why you have come," said Charybole.

"I think you know," he replied. "I have come for the githyanki."

"Whatever the reward is," she said, "it is not enough. Turn away or prepare to die."

"Before you fire your arrow, may I ask a question?"

"One question only," said Charybole. "And whatever it is, it will not soothe me into lowering my guard."

"My question is simple," said the man. "The githyanki are your enemies. Why do you risk your life defending one of them?"

Charybole leaned over, picked Malargoten up and held him above her head, and answered: "Does this look like an enemy?"

The man stared at the infant for a long moment, and finally shook his shaggy head.

"I have been misinformed," he said. "I am as formidable an assassin as my race has produced. I have defeated sixty-three men in mortal combat. There is no one that I fear, no nightmare creature that I will not slay if the price is right." He paused. "But I do not kill children, not even for gold. Go in peace, githzerai."

And it was as if the heavens were rent asunder, a single voice screamed, *"NO!"* louder than the thunder, and suddenly the man was surrounded by not three, not four, but six enormous, lobsterlike chuuls, denizens of fetid waters and murky cesspools, their huge pincers clicking open and shut as they approached him. He fought bravely, never took a backward step, but they methodically began tearing him to ribbons. When he was blood-soaked, one eye gone, a gaping hole where an ear had been, the chuuls stood back, and Zat's voice said, *"Now will you do my bidding?"*

The man glared up at the sky with his one remaining eye and bellowed, *"No!"*—and the chuuls were on him again, and this time they didn't relent until there was nothing left of him but a few white bones and a very damp spot on the ground.

Charybole stood her ground, an arrow in her bow, five more clutched in the fingers of her left hand, one for each of the creatures that smelled as foul and loathsome as their dwelling place, but one by one the chuuls vanished as suddenly as they had appeared.

She put her arrows in a quiver, slipped her bow over her shoulder, and picked Malargoten up in her arms.

"It is no longer safe here," she said as if the infant could understand her. "We must move every day, never sleep in the same place twice. I am sorry to force such a life upon you, but it is better than what Zat envisions, which is no life at all."

And so saying, she began walking farther and farther away from Threshold.

You can walk as far as you want, said the voice inside her head, *you can go to the heart of the Elemental Chaos, you can even descend to the demon-infested Abyss. It makes no difference. Wherever you go, I will find you.*

"Until he is bigger," replied Charybole aloud. "Then perhaps *we* will find *you*."

But there was no response.

* * * * *

They remained in hiding for four years. Which is not to say that they found one secure place and remained there. Sooner or later Zat sniffed them out and sent her minions. Once it was a githzerai assassin, once another human assassin. Once it was a trio of half-fey, half-insect banshraes, once it was a bear, the most recent time it was a devil-spawned cambion, human in appearance but not in blood or powers, brandishing his hellsword.

Each time it seemed certain that this was the end for young Malargoten—and for Charybole, if she had the temerity to stand between the predators and their chosen prey, and of course she always did—but somehow, when the battle was done and the dust had cleared, it was the githzerai and the foundling who emerged alive, and their truly awesome foes who lay dead upon the ground.

* * * * *

"I do not understand it!" said Zat in tones of cold fury. "She is just a githzerai female."

None of her servants or sycophants had the courage to point out that Zat herself was "just a githzerai female."

"I have been trying to slay the githyanki foundling for almost five years," she continued. "Every single assassin and every single creature I have sent should have been able to accomplish its task. What is it about this Charybole? There is nothing in her childhood, nothing in her past, to imply that she should be able to withstand such assaults. *Nothing!* So how does she do it? Who has trained her to slay our greatest assassins, our most fright-

ening creatures, with nothing but the primitive weapons she has created herself? Not only that, but she defeats them even when I send them in teams, even as she is protecting the githyanki child! How is it possible?"

There were no answers, of course, because no one knew how it was possible.

Zat sat perfectly still, staring into space, for five minutes, then ten more, then another twenty, until her retainers thought she had gone into some kind of trance, or perhaps even turned comatose. Just before they could call the wizards to see if they could bring her back to the here and now, Zat stood up.

"I had not wanted to take this measure," she said coldly, "but I will not be thwarted again!"

* * * * *

Charybole sensed it before she could hear it, and she could hear it before she could see it.

They had found a cave that was free of all other life forms; even bats seemed uninterested in it. It had been a hard trek and a long day, and the exhausted Malargoten lay asleep deep in the cave, free from prying eyes, and safe from whatever was approaching.

Charybole sat on the ground, her weapons laid out before her: a dagger, a sword, an axe, a spear, a bow, and twenty-seven arrows, half of them dipped in poison, half in things that were worse than poison. She was every bit as mystified as Zat that she had emerged victorious from her various conflicts. Still, whatever was approaching, she would not flinch, would not give an inch. She was ready for it, ready to once again defend the foundling that had captured her sympathy and her heart.

She didn't know what it was, but she knew it had to be big, bigger than anything else she had yet faced, because its approach actually made the ground shake. The wind changed, and suddenly she could smell it. It smelled like nothing she had ever encountered before.

The ground trembled even more, the acrid odor became stronger still, and suddenly it was standing there in front of her, its single black eye glaring balefully at her. It was an astral dreadnought, Zat's ultimate weapon, a gargantuan creature whose gaping mouth was filled top and bottom with razor-sharp teeth. Its single eye was black, its tongue a dark blue, its armored scales reddish-brown. Its strong arms ended in pincered claws that looked as though they had evolved for the sole purpose of holding githzerai helpless in them. Its lower body was serpentine, but it moved with speed and grace, and even the lack of legs did not stop the ground from vibrating as it undulated across it. Charybole stared at the dreadnought's body, trying to see how huge it truly was, but there was no end to it; its tail seemed to extend to infinity.

"And you are from the Astral Plane," whispered Charybole. "How did my race ever survive there next to creatures like you?"

She shot six, seven, eight arrows into it. It paid them no mind. She hurled her spear, which buried itself three feet into the dreadnought's chest. The dreadnought ignored it. She fired two more arrows. They had no effect.

Somehow she knew this wouldn't be like the other encounters. There was no way she could live through this. She wanted to check the cave, to see if Malargoten was awake yet, and if so to convince him to stay hidden, but she knew if she paid any attention at all to the cave's entrance the dreadnought would know where the foundling was, and it was for the foundling that it had come.

She picked up her sword and her axe and edged off to the right, hoping that the creature would follow her. Once she had moved away from the cave's entrance it paid her no further attention, and she quickly positioned herself between the dreadnought and the cave once again.

When it was within arm's reach she buried the sword in its side. She knew from the arrows and the spear that she couldn't kill it; her only hope was that she might somehow be able to cripple it. But though the sword plunged deep into the creature's scales, it had no more effect than her other weapons. She swung her axe, but the dreadnought reached out its pincered claw, caught her head in it, and squeezed. It was over in a fraction of a second.

The dreadnought uttered a scream of triumph, and cast her lifeless body aside. It couldn't know it, of course, but that scream spelled its own doom, for it woke the sleeping foundling.

Malargoten walked to the cave's entrance, briefly rubbing sleep from his eyes. He saw the lifeless body of his adoptive mother, then turned to face her slayer.

The dreadnought saw its prey and roared. The foundling showed no fear, but stepped out of the cave. The creature reached out a pincered claw to grab him.

"No," said Malargoten softly, but with authority.

The dreadnought's claw seemed to strike an invisible barrier and bounced off.

The foundling stared at the creature, his expression a mixture of fury and contempt. Finally he waved a hand and snapped a finger, and the dreadnought collapsed, convulsing in agony, and died.

Malargoten paid it no more attention. Instead he walked over to Charybole's body, stared at her crushed skull, and wondered what his people did with their dead.

* * * * *

Zat sat alone in her quarters. She was troubled, and she was confused. The reports had come in: she knew that the dreadnought had killed the annoying female who had withstood so many of her minions . . . but she also knew that the dreadnought itself was dead, though there was not a sign of violence on its body. And there was no trace of the foundling. Probably the dreadnought had eaten it, but she felt uneasy not knowing for certain.

Suddenly she became aware of another presence in the room, not a physical presence, but a presence nonetheless. She looked around, and saw a shimmering in the air, a shimmering that suggested something tangible, something *more*.

"Who are you?" she demanded.

You know who I am, a voice said inside her head. *And you have made a serious blunder. For all of my life you have hunted me down like an animal. I was never in danger, of course, and until this latest attempt I was always able to protect my mother, even though she was not aware of it.*

"You are githyanki!" spat Zat.

I could have been one of you, continued the voice calmly. *Until now I bore you no ill will. But now you have killed my mother–*

"Your false mother," interrupted Zat.

The only mother I have ever known. You are safe for the moment, Zat. I will do nothing to you today, or this week, or this year. I will wait for my powers to mature, powers that could have served the githzerai. I wash my hands of your race, and my own kind will not have me after I have lived with yours. I will live apart from all living things until the time is right. And when it is, when I am invulnerable to the combined might of all the githzerai, I will return–and you, Zat, will be the first to know it.

She was about to reply, but before she could she sensed she was alone again.

She considered what she had heard.

Isn't it ironic, she thought bitterly, that by defending the githzerai race, I may have doomed it?

Well, then, was there a way to soften his attitude? Zat smiled ruefully. Would *she* give up plans of vengeance were their positions reversed? Of course not.

Finally, was there a possibility, however slim, that he was wrong, that a five-year-old githyanki child was *not* the most potent and invulnerable force within the Elemental Chaos?

She didn't hold out much hope for that–but suddenly she knew that she would spend as much time as she had before his return trying to find out.

About the author

Mike Resnick is, according to *Locus*, the all-time leading award winner, living or dead, for short science fiction. He has won five Hugos, a Nebula, and other major awards in the USA, France, Spain, Poland, Croatia, and Japan. Mike is the author of sixty novels, almost 250 stories, and two screenplays, and has edited more than forty anthologies. In his spare time, he sleeps.

Born to Lead: Warlord Essentials

By Robert J. Schwalb
Illustrations by David Rapoza

"You'd do well to not put too much stock in your plans because no tactic is without flaws—no strategy is without weakness. Instead, look to the men and women who follow you, and foster in them courage and ferocity. Show them victory's path and lead them down it. Without them, you fight alone and no one short of a god can defeat an army."
~Captain Harrow, leader of the Bold Few

A warlord is a welcome addition to any adventuring group. Possessed of experience, talent, and natural leadership, warlords can bring their tactical expertise to bear on the battlefield, enabling those at their sides to adapt their own fighting techniques to take advantage of the warlord's combat style. Warlords might be adept at battlefield command, but few warlords share the same methods, instead using maneuvers arising from their combat experience, their backgrounds, and even their people. Over the following pages, you can build a solid foundation for playing one of the game's most dynamic and varied leaders.

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The Basics

"I worry only when everything goes as planned."

~Torment

The warlord stands alongside several classes filling the leader role. Leaders, whether cleric, artificer, or bard, use their power source and its expressions to improve the party, boosting defenses, improving attacks, granting temporary hit points, and, above all, allowing allies to regain hit points during combat encounters. Leaders share these functions, but each express this function in different ways, allowing warlords to feel and play differently from shamans as they do from any other leader class. What follows is an overview of those class features that help the warlord stand apart and make the class an attractive option to any player considering this role.

Combat Leader

At heart, the warlord is a battlefield commander, and those who fight at his or her side find their combat capabilities improved. The simplest expression of this characteristic lives in the Combat Leader class feature, whereby you boost your own and your allies' initiative checks. The bonus frees other characters from having to spend feats to compensate for low initiative modifiers and thus choose feats to make them better in their respective roles. As well, since you also benefit from this class feature, you don't have to divert points to Dexterity or pick up feats to act early in the round. Do be sure to pick up the Combat Commander feat when you reach the paragon tier. By then, your Intelligence or Charisma modifier should be equal to the bonus granted by Improved Initiative.

Commanding Presence

Another way warlords help their allies in combat is by modifying what happens when they spend action points, frequently ensuring that the expenditure doesn't go wasted. Commanding Presence is key to the warlord builds presented in the *Player's Handbook*® and *Martial Power*™, so for more information on their different expressions, be sure to review Warlord Builds, below.

Inspiring Word

Helping allies regain hit points during a combat encounter unites every leader class in the Dungeons & Dragons® Roleplaying Game. Characters can use second wind to regain hit points, but doing so costs a standard action and it can be used only once per encounter. Through *inspiring word*, the warlord lets the character not only spend a healing surge but also regain extra hit points as well. It can be hard to visualize how this effect might work given that warlords are martial, and thus not magical by any traditional sense, characters. The warlord achieves this healing through speeches, stirring pronouncements, battle cries, and so on, which helps his or her allies find within themselves the means to shrug off their injuries and battle through their pain.

Timing: As with other leaders, *inspiring word* has limits. You can use this class feature only twice per encounter until midway through the paragon tier, and then use it three times per encounter. With these limitations, make sure each use counts. Give bloodied targets preference and then only when the hit points regained stick. It's no good giving an ally hit points back only to see him or her wiped out with a nasty attack on the following round. Sometimes you need to wait for a character to fall to 0 hit points or fewer. Waiting sounds crazy, but don't forget that when a dying character regains hit points, the hit points start at 0 no matter if the character is –5 or –30. Allowing the ally to spend a healing surge while hovering around 0 is probably not going to help the ally when the monster can land a nasty attack to chew through the few hit points the character does regain. Sure, the character has to stand back up, but at least the enemy has have moved on by then.

Feats: If you are the only leader in the party, your allies lean on your healing powers and features more heavily than they otherwise might. Improved Inspiring Word from *Martial Power* allows you to add your Charisma modifier to the hit points the target regains. Dwarves, eladrin, and dragonborn also have feats in the same book to increase hit points regained or grant saving throws with *inspiring word*.

Sight and Sound

Warlord class features and some powers require allies to have line of sight to you and also hear you. Stay visible. Don't go skulking in the back ranks. You need to be in the middle of things, directing traffic and staying close to the allies who depend on you to see them through the battle.

Warlord Builds

The options under the Commanding Presence class feature best distinguish one warlord for another, since each speaks to a different leadership style and suggests how you might make your companions the best at what they do. Once you make this decision, you can choose powers and feats to support the class feature or expand your options by dabbling in other areas. When considering your build, think about the technique that best fits your style.

✦ **Adaptable:** If you want to maximize your options to respond to any kind of threat, consider the resourceful warlord build.

✦ **Aggressive:** When you want to lead by example and take the fight to your enemies, the tactical warlord is for you.

✦ **Cautious:** If you'd rather watch and wait, shoring up your allies' weaknesses, the inspiring warlord is your best option.

✦ **Reckless:** With great risk comes great reward, and when you're willing to risk yourself and your allies to dispatch the enemies quickly, the bravura warlord is a good choice.

Bravura Warlord

"You rest when you're dead. Now quit your whining and get back in there."

~Argus, Karakast Garrison Commander

Reckless, impulsive, and bold beyond common sense, the bravura warlord (*Martial Power*, page 102) incites allies to take dangerous risks. They might not work every time, but when they do, the results are spectacular. This build places you in far more danger than a warlord might otherwise face since you need to be up front and in the thick of things to pull off your stunts. Since many related powers have a gambling element, it's worth hedging your bets and picking feats to boost your offensive capabilities. This said, you're bound to be in trouble and the defender might not be around to take off the pressure. Defensive feats to improve your armor selection, healing surges, and hit points are key.

Consider the bravura warlord build if your party is striker-light or depends on ranged strikers such as warlocks and archer rangers. The Bravura Presence allows characters to spend action points to make extra attacks or move into position, strong assets when your allies need distance between themselves and their targets. Plus, your attacks incite other attacks, letting you fill any gaps in the melee striker department.

Power Selection

You depend on sudden, explosive offenses on the battlefield, even if this could expose you and your allies to greater danger. Your attack powers should deal damage while also inciting allies to act more aggressively. As you advance, you might diversify your power selection to mitigate the difficulties your techniques sometime create.

The two at-will powers recommended in *Martial Power* are good choices. *Brash assault* exposes you to danger so a nearby ally can make an attack, which is especially useful when you're flanking. Although considered the weaker cousin to *commander's strike*, *furious smash* is a good secondary power for the bravura warlord. The power does depend on two attack rolls~one for your power and the other for the ally's attack, but both have better accuracy than a standard AC-targeting attack.

Arms and Armor

When outfitting your warlord, don't forget your role in the group. It's not your job to deal the most damage: high-damage weapons aren't necessary. You have only chainmail, at least to start, so you need to shore up your AC with a light shield. A longsword (and eventually a bastard sword) is a solid pick since it gives you accuracy and modest damage. There might be times (and tactics) when a reach weapon comes in handy. This is especially true for inspiring and resourceful warlords, but every warlord should carry a polearm or longspear in case he or she is stuck behind the defender.

Inspiring Warlord

"Friends, this is our fight, our chance for glory. Don't despair. Victory is at hand!"

~Allusan, Hero of the Three-Day War

Inspiring warlords are beacons who awaken in their allies new strength and new power with which they can overcome their enemies. An inspiring warlord is not a front-line warrior, but instead commands from behind, urging allies into action, shepherding them to victory. The inspiring warlord comes closest to a traditional healer, but can also augment allies in other ways.

The inspiring warlord is the best build for warlords who must shoulder the burden of being the primary leader. Inspiring Presence allows allies who spend action points to regain hit points, and so any feat that improves this feature is bound to be help-

ful. Since allies might not have damage when they spend their action points, this class feature might not be effective, especially when controllers and ranged strikers pepper enemies from afar. Inspired Recovery is a useful feat, but again its benefits might be a little too situational to pick this up right away. If you fill the party's primary leader role, consider Improved Inspiring Word (*Martial Power,* page 136) to increase the hit points regained. If not, put that feat on hold and pick up Lend Might (*Martial Power,* page 137) to improve accuracy on attacks you grant.

Defenders are your best partners in the adventuring group and you should stay close to these characters. When paired with a fighter, you can help the character mark additional enemies and also give the ally the resources needed to hold the marks (in other words, healing).

Power Selection

You keep allies in the fight when they might otherwise fall. You inspire attacks, help allies shrug off damage, and bolster their accuracy. Look for attack powers that either allow allies to regain hit points or grant them bonuses to defenses. You might have to sacrifice Strength to keep your Charisma score high and if so, powers that allow allies to make attacks in your place is a must.

Inspiring warlords who have lower Strength scores but high Charisma scores should invest in the powers recommended in the *Player's Handbook*. *Commander's strike* allows a higher-accuracy character to make an attack in your place, and *furious smash* gives strikers the edge they need to connect their attacks with your enemies. If you want the ability to deal damage yourself, be sure to check out *rousing assault* (*Player's Handbook Heroes: Series 1*).

Resourceful Warlord

"I see they're using the Nerathi gambit. Let's see how they handle the Arkhosian pincer . . ."

~Aramar, Dragonborn Captain

Resourceful warlords have tricks for every situation and can find solutions to the thorniest problems. A resourceful warrior can hang back like an inspiring warlord or leap into the thick of things, fighting alongside the strikers and defenders. Improved versatility comes at a price, however, for resourceful warlords need good secondary abilities, often at the expense of their primary ability.

Resourceful warlords are the wild cards in any group and do best when they fill in as a secondary leader. Resourceful Presence allows allies to spike their damage when they spend action points to attack or insulate themselves from further damage should action point attacks miss. Provided your allies use their action points wisely, you can expect your Resourceful Presence to come into play nearly every encounter, and so the recommended Improved Resources feat (*Martial Power,* page 136) is a strong choice. Since you need a good Intelligence and Charisma score, you might depend on allies to make attacks in your place, so the Lend Might feat is also a good option.

Power Selection

Warlord powers favoring your build include a mix of melee and ranged attacks, offer benefits to defense and offense, and provide healing and incite attacks. You're at your best when you mix up your powers to adapt to every situation. Since your Resourceful Presence can let an ally deal considerable extra damage, you should have an accuracy-boosting attack power on hand.

Martial Power recommends *commander's strike* and *opening shove* for at-will powers. These powers are strong choices if you have a lower Strength. *Opening shove* lets you shed an enemy causing you problems and hand it off to a defender or another melee attacker to dispatch.

Tactical Warlord

"Tordek, get in there and hold that line! We need covering fire now Mialee! Right. Now, the rest of you, follow me!"

~Morgan, Veteran Sergeant and Adventurer

How can you win glory when you hand away every chance to your allies? Rather than inspire your companions, react to your enemies' actions, or incite the party to rash action, you take a direct hand, smashing through the enemy's ranks with strong attacks and tactical knowhow. Your attacks create opportunities for your allies, sometimes allowing them to move into positions, boosting their attack rolls and damage rolls, or covering them long enough for them to find their bearings and renew their attacks.

As a tactical warlord, your secondary role is defender and although you might not equal the fighter in tangling up your enemies, you're no slacker either. Tactical Presence gives allies an accuracy boost when they make attacks from their action points, helping to ensure that no action point spent is wasted. The bonus is equal to one-half your Intelligence modifier, so Improved Tactics (*Martial Power,* page 136) and Tactical Assault are almost mandatory feats.

You're going to be in the thick of things, so defensive feats such as Armor Proficiency (scale), Shield

Proficiency (heavy), and Toughness should be early investments too. Unlike other warlords, you're less likely to have allies attack in your place, so attack-boosting feats are critical too.

Power Selection

Tactical warlord powers reflect your hands-on approach to leadership, and you make attacks against your enemies directly. Look for powers that grant benefits to allies when you hit, and avoid those that substitute ally attacks for your own.

The two at-will attack powers recommended in the *Player's Handbook* include *viper's strike* and *wolf pack tactics*. Both powers represent your style and poise in combat. The former reinforces your secondary role as defender, and the latter lets you move an ally into position. Use these powers as models for your encounter and daily attack power selections.

Abilities

The warlord is an A-shaped class and so regardless of your build choice, Strength is your most important ability. Your secondary ability or abilities reinforce your secondary role by boosting those warlord powers that include special riders keyed to your choice of Commanding Presence class feature.

Strength

Strength governs attacks and damage, and it benefits your Fortitude. Although many warlords can substitute their allies' attacks for their own, most encounter and daily attack powers depend on a warlord making the attack roll. A resourceful warlord might sacrifice Strength to improve the two secondary abilities, but doing so requires the character to pick up Weapon Expertise (*Player's Handbook 2*) or Student of the Sword.

Secondary Abilities

Warlords look to Intelligence and Charisma as their secondary abilities. Tactical warlords need Intelligence, bravura and inspiring warlords need Charisma, and resourceful warlords need both. In all cases, having decent scores in both abilities is useful to keep defenses higher and also to improve class skills available to the class.

Other Abilities

Constitution is a good tertiary ability, especially for warlords who are on the front lines. This said, a high Constitution doesn't benefit Fortitude, so its value is less than it might be for other classes. Dexterity and Wisdom can both be sacrificed. Warlords have Combat Leader to make up for a low initiative modifier, and Wisdom plays into no features or powers unless you intend to multiclass into cleric. If you have to sacrifice anywhere, these abilities are the best places to stick your 8.

Ability Score Spreads

The following ability score spreads act as baseline examples, intended to serve as starting points. Ability adjustments from race choice, your party's composition, and various other factors might make certain adjustments to these examples necessary. For example, a genasi tactical warlord might reduce Intelligence to increase Constitution, and an inspiring warlord functioning as the only leader in a party of seven might move more points to Charisma to maximize healing.

BRAVURA WARLORD SPREAD

Score	Ability	Score	Ability	Score	Ability
17	STR Strength	10	DEX Dexterity	8	WIS Wisdom
14	CON Constitution	10	INT Intelligence	14	CHA Charisma

INSPIRING WARLORD SPREAD

Score	Ability	Score	Ability	Score	Ability
16	STR Strength	11	DEX Dexterity	8	WIS Wisdom
13	CON Constitution	10	INT Intelligence	16	CHA Charisma

RESOURCEFUL WARLORD SPREAD

Score	Ability	Score	Ability	Score	Ability
16	STR Strength	10	DEX Dexterity	8	WIS Wisdom
13	CON Constitution	14	INT Intelligence	14	CHA Charisma

TACTICAL WARLORD SPREAD

Score	Ability	Score	Ability	Score	Ability
17	STR Strength	10	DEX Dexterity	8	WIS Wisdom
13	CON Constitution	14	INT Intelligence	11	CHA Charisma

Race

Several factors influence your race choice. Any race offering an increase to Strength is likely an excellent option, but don't let a high Strength blind you to your needs. Any race providing increases to Intelligence and Charisma are good choices. Racial powers and traits might also carry some weight. An elf doesn't increase any associated abilities, but it does grant a higher speed and reroll for attacks, and thus you might find the challenging combination rewarding and interesting in game play. The following recommendations look at purely mechanical considerations and some combinations might seem inappropriate based on a race's story.

RACE AND BUILD

Race	Recommended Builds
Changeling	Resourceful Warlord
Deva	Tactical Warlord
Dragonborn	Bravura Warlord
Drow	Inspiring Warlord
Dwarf	Tactical Warlord
Eladrin	Resourceful Warlord
Elf	Inspiring Warlord
Genasi	Tactical Warlord
Githzerai	Inspiring Warlord
Gnoll	Bravura Warlord
Gnome	Resourceful Warlord
Goliath	Bravura Warlord
Half-Elf	Resourceful Warlord
Half-Orc	Bravura Warlord
Halfling	Bravura Warlord
Human	Tactical Warlord
Kalashtar	Inspiring Warlord
Longtooth Shifter	Bravura Warlord
Minotaur	Bravura Warlord
Razorclaw Shifter	Tactical Warlord
Revenant	Bravura Warlord
Shadar-Kai	Tactical Warlord
Tiefling	Resourceful Warlord
Warforged	Tactical Warlord

Warlord Feats

The following feats can provide you with more options for your warlord.

Heroic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of any level who meets the prerequisites.

Bold Gamble

Prerequisite: Warlord, Bravura Presence class feature

Benefit: Whenever you spend an action point to make an extra attack, you can choose to use this feat. If the attack hits, the enemy grants combat advantage until the end of your next turn. If the attack misses, you grant combat advantage to the enemy until the end of your next turn.

Courageous Word

Prerequisite: Warlord, Bravura Presence class feature, *inspiring word* power

Benefit: When you use *inspiring word*, the target can choose to take advantage of this feat. If the target does, he or she grants combat advantage until the start of your next turn but deals extra damage equal to your Charisma modifier against the next enemy he or she hits before the end of your next turn.

Covered Retreat

Prerequisite: Warlord, Resourceful Presence class feature

Benefit: When an enemy provokes an opportunity attack from you, you can take an opportunity action to let one ally adjacent to you shift a number of squares equal to your Intelligence modifier to a square not adjacent to the provoking enemy as a free action.

Emboldening Presence

Prerequisite: Warlord, Inspiring Presence class feature

Benefit: When an ally with line of sight to you expends his or her second wind, he or she gains a bonus to saving throws equal to your Charisma modifier until the end of his or her next turn.

Imaginative Reaction

Prerequisite: Warlord, Combat Leader class feature, Resourceful Presence class feature

Benefit: Whenever you roll initiative, you can subtract 4 from your check result to increase the result of one or two allies who benefit from Combat Leader. One ally gains a bonus equal to your Charisma modifier and the other gains a bonus equal to your Intelligence modifier.

Inspiring Aid

Prerequisite: Warlord, Inspiring Presence class feature

Benefit: Whenever you or an ally who can hear you and who has line of sight to you takes the aid another action, the bonus granted from a successful attack roll or skill check equals 4 instead of 2.

Prepared for Anything

Prerequisite: Warlord, Combat Leader class feature

Benefit: Any ally who benefits from your Combat Leader class feature gains a +2 bonus to AC until the end of his or her first turn in an encounter.

Resourceful Donation

Prerequisite: Warlord, Resourceful Presence class feature

Benefit: Whenever you spend a healing surge, you can divide the hit points regained between yourself and one ally adjacent to you in any proportion.

Heroic Tier Feats

Name	Prerequisite	Benefit
Bold Gamble	Warlord, Bravura Presence	If hit with action point attack, enemy grants combat advantage; if miss, you grant combat advantage
Courageous Word	Warlord, Bravura Presence, *inspiring word*	*Inspiring word* target can grant combat advantage to deal extra damage on next attack.
Covered Retreat	Warlord, Resourceful Presence	Forgo opportunity attack to let adjacent ally shift
Emboldening Presence	Warlord, Inspiring Presence	Allies gain bonus to saving throws with second wind
Imaginative Reaction	Warlord, Combat Leader, Resourceful Presence	Take initiative penalty to grant bonus to allies' initiatives
Inspiring Aid	Warlord, Inspiring Presence	Aid another grants +4 instead of +2
Prepared for Anything	Warlord, Combat Leader class feature	Allies gain +2 AC until they act
Resourceful Donation	Warlord, Resourceful Presence	Spend healing surge and divide hit points regained
Risky Charge	Warlord, Bravura Presence	Knock enemy prone on a charge or the enemy can attack you
Rousing Charge	Warlord, Resourceful Presence	Forgo +1 attack with charge to grant ally +2 attack
Rousing Resurgence	Warlord, Inspiring Presence class feature	Allies gain temporary hit points with second wind
Shrewd Positioning	Warlord, Combat Leader, Tactical Presence	Slide allies 1 square at start of combat
Stirring Word	Warlord, Inspiring Presence, *inspiring word*	*Inspiring word* target gets temporary hit points
Tactical Adjustment	Warlord, Tactical Presence	Slide ally 1 square with attack from action point
Tactical Feint	Warlord, Tactical Presence	Grant bonus to attack target of action point attack

Paragon Tier Feats

Name	Prerequisite	Benefit
Defense of the Inspired	Warlord, Inspiring Presence	Allies taking total defense add your Charisma modifier to defenses instead of +2.
Tactician's Word	Warlord, Tactical Presence, *inspiring word*	*Inspiring word* target gains bonus to next attack
Versatile Word	Warlord, Resourceful Presence, *inspiring word*	*Inspiring word* target can shift or gain bonus to AC

Risky Charge

Prerequisite: Warlord, Bravura Presence class feature

Benefit: When you charge, you can choose to use this feat. If the charge attack hits, you also knock the enemy prone. If the attack misses, the enemy can make a melee basic attack against you as a free action.

Rousing Charge

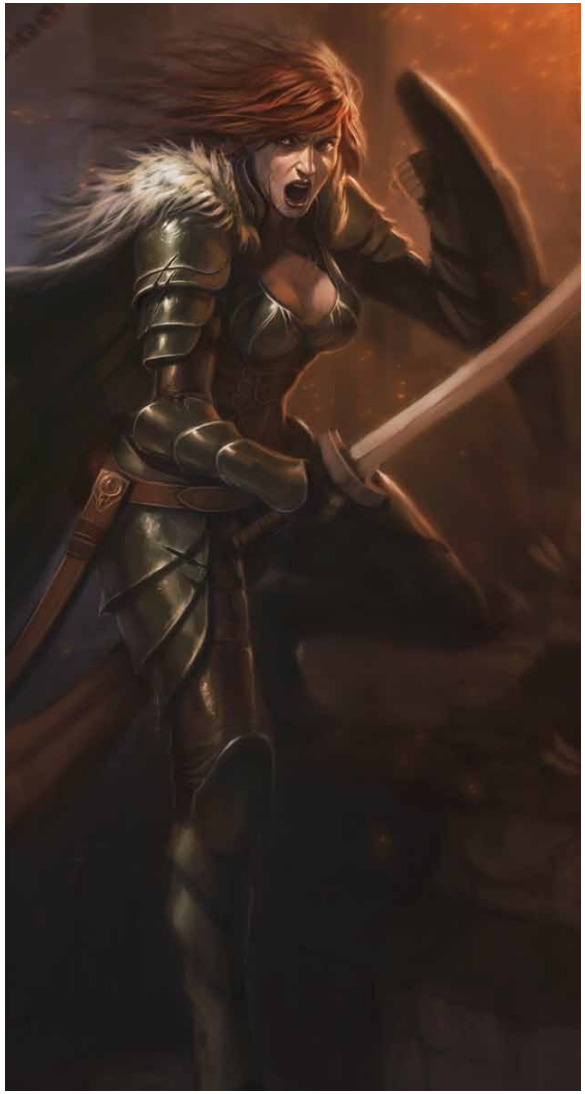
Prerequisite: Warlord, Resourceful Presence class feature

Benefit: When you charge, you can forgo the bonus to your attack roll to instead grant one ally with line of sight to you a +2 bonus to his or her next attack roll against the same enemy.

Rousing Resurgence

Prerequisite: Warlord, Inspiring Presence class feature

Benefit: Allies who expend their second winds while they have line of sight to you also gain temporary hit points equal to your Charisma modifier plus one-half your level.



Shrewd Positioning

Prerequisite: Warlord, Combat Leader class feature, Tactical Presence class feature

Benefit: When you make an initiative check, you can slide each ally benefiting from Combat Leader 1 square.

Stirring Word

Prerequisite: Warlord, Inspiring Presence class feature, *inspiring word* power

Benefit: When you use *inspiring word*, the target gains temporary hit points equal to your Charisma modifier.

Tactical Adjustment

Prerequisite: Warlord, Tactical Presence class feature

Benefit: Whenever an ally within your line of sight spends an action point to make an extra attack, you can slide that ally 1 square before or after the attack.

Tactical Feint

Prerequisite: Warlord, Tactical Presence class feature

Benefit: Whenever you spend an action point to make an extra attack, one ally within 3 squares of you gains a bonus equal to one-half your Intelligence modifier to his or her next attack roll against a target of your attack before the end of your next turn.

Paragon Tier

Any feat in this section is available to a character of 11th level or higher who meets the prerequisites.

Defense of the Inspired

Prerequisite: 11th level, warlord, Inspiring Presence class feature

Benefit: Whenever an ally with line of sight to you takes the total defense action, the bonus to his or her defenses equals your Charisma modifier.

Tactician's Word

Prerequisite: 11th level, warlord, Tactical Presence class feature, *inspiring word* power

Benefit: When you use *inspiring word*, the target gains a bonus equal to one-half your Intelligence modifier to its next attack roll made before the start of your next turn.

Versatile Word

Prerequisite: 11th level, warlord, Resourceful Presence class feature, *inspiring word* power

Benefit: When you use *inspiring word*, in addition to the benefit of the power, the target can either shift a number of squares equal to one-half your Charisma modifier as a free action or gain a bonus to AC equal to one-half your Intelligence modifier until the start of its next turn.

Warlord Exploits

The following powers provide new options for warlords to take advantage of their preferred leadership styles and combat techniques.

Level 1 Encounter Exploits

Coordinated Offensive — **Warlord Attack 1**

You draw the enemy's attention long enough for one ally to move to safety and another to move into position.

Encounter ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action — **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Special: If you used *inspiring word* on this turn, you gain a +2 power bonus to the attack roll.
Hit: 1[W] + Strength modifier damage, and one ally adjacent to you or to the target can shift 1 square as a free action.
Effect: You slide one ally adjacent to you or to the target 1 square to a square adjacent to no enemies.

Provocative Order — Warlord Attack 1

You prompt an ally to take the fight to the enemy.

Encounter ✦ Martial
Standard Action **Close** burst 5
Target: One ally who has line of sight to you and can hear you
Effect: The target makes a charge attack as a free action. This attack deals 1[W] extra damage.

Level 1 Daily Exploits

Lamb to the Slaughter — Warlord Attack 1

The enemy succumbs to your challenge and engages you—only to find more opponents than it expected.

Daily ✦ Martial, Reliable, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** 5
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. Will
Hit: You pull the target 5 squares, and one, two, or three allies within 5 squares of you who have line of sight to you and can hear you can make charge attacks against the target as free actions.

Level 3 Encounter Exploits

Devastating Offensive — Warlord Attack 3

You knock the enemy aside and call forth a nearby ally for a combined assault.

Encounter ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Strength modifier damage. You slide the target 1 square and slide one ally adjacent to you 3 squares to the square the target vacated. Then the ally can make a melee basic attack against the target as a free action.
Resourceful Presence: Your ally gains a power bonus to attack rolls on the melee basic attack equal to one-half your Charisma modifier (minimum +1).
Tactical Presence: Your ally gains a power bonus to damage rolls on the melee basic attack equal to your Intelligence modifier.

Road to Victory — Warlord Attack 3

Your sudden strike clears a path through the battlefield for your ally, and leaves open the option for more movement.

Encounter ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage, and an ally within your line of sight can shift 1 square or move 3 squares as a free action.
Effect: Until the end of your next turn, when you use *inspiring word* on an ally, that ally can shift 1 square or move a number of squares equal to your Intelligence modifier as a free action.

Level 5 Daily Exploits

Bait the Hook — Warlord Attack 5

You give your champion the encouragement and strength needed to respond to the foe's attacks.

Daily ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Strength modifier damage.
Effect: The target grants combat advantage to an ally within 5 squares of it and gains vulnerable to damage from that ally's attacks equal to your Charisma modifier (save ends both).

Rousing Call — Warlord Attack 5

Fallen comrades cannot help but answer your call because your battle cry stirs the most melancholy hearts.

Daily ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Strength modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Each unconscious or dying ally within 5 squares of you can make a saving throw and each prone ally within 5 squares of you can take the stand up action as a free action.

Level 6 Utility Exploits

Leader's Intercession — Warlord Utility 6

Brash impulse places you in the attack's path to spare an ally from harm.

Encounter ✦ Healing, Martial
Immediate Interrupt **Melee** touch
Trigger: An attack hits an adjacent ally
Target: The triggering ally
Effect: You and the target switch places. The attack hits you instead, and you or the target can spend a healing surge.

Stand Fast — Warlord Utility 6

You and your companions form an immovable wall to withstand the enemy tide.

Encounter ✦ Martial
Minor Action **Close** burst 3
Target: You and any ally in burst
Effect: The target cannot be knocked prone, pushed, pulled, or slid until the end of your next turn. Also until the end of your next turn, when you use *inspiring word* on an ally, the ally can stand up as a free action.

Level 7 Encounter Exploits

Withering Courage — Warlord Attack 7

One strike from your weapon knocks the enemy off balance; each strike from an ally pushes it farther over the edge.

Encounter ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage, and each ally who hits the target before the end of your next turn gives it a cumulative –1 penalty to its attack rolls until the end of your next turn, to a maximum of -5.
Bravura Presence: Any ally adjacent to you gains a power bonus to damage rolls equal to your Charisma modifier against the target until the end of your next turn.
Inspiring Presence: Any ally adjacent to you gains combat advantage against the target while it is taking a penalty to its attack rolls from this attack.

Level 9 Daily Exploits

Awakened Wrath — Warlord Attack 9

Seeing your hurts, an ally explodes with unexpected violence.

Daily ✦ Martial
Immediate Reaction **Close** burst 5
Trigger: You are bloodied by an attack
Target: One ally with line of sight to you
Effect: The target makes a melee basic attack against each enemy adjacent to him or her as a free action. Then the target can shift 1 square for each enemy he or she hit as a free action, but the target must end this movement closer to you.

Teachable Moment — Warlord Attack 9

Your successes show your allies where the enemy is weak, and your failures show them where it is too strong.

Daily ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, each time you hit with a melee attack, one ally with line of sight to you gains a +3 power bonus to its next damage roll. Each time you miss with a melee attack, one ally with line of sight to you gains a +2 power bonus to its next attack roll.

Level 10 Utility Exploits

Draw Their Eyes — Warlord Utility 10

You fix the enemy in your eyes, devoting yourself to defeating the foe at any cost.

Encounter ✦ Martial
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: Move your speed. At the end of your movement, you grant combat advantage to and are marked by one enemy adjacent to you until the end of your next turn. While you are marked by this enemy, you gain a power bonus to your damage rolls against the enemy equal to your Strength modifier.

Warlord's Denial — Warlord Utility 10

With your stirring words, you prove that the enemy has no hold on you and your allies.

Daily ✦ Martial
Minor Action **Close** burst 2
Target: You and any ally in burst
Effect: The target makes a saving throw. Until the end of your next turn, when you use *inspiring word* on an ally, the ally can make a saving throw.

Level 13 Encounter Exploits

Invitational Assault — Warlord Attack 13

Your attack invites a nearby ally to join your struggle, and those who answer are the better for it.

Encounter ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage, and you slide one ally within 5 squares of you 6 squares to a square adjacent to the target. That ally can make a melee basic attack against the target as a free action.
Bravura Presence: The ally grants combat advantage to the target until the end of your next turn, but he or she deals extra damage equal to your Strength modifier when using its basic attack.
Tactical Presence: The ally gains a bonus to its attack roll equal to your Intelligence modifier.

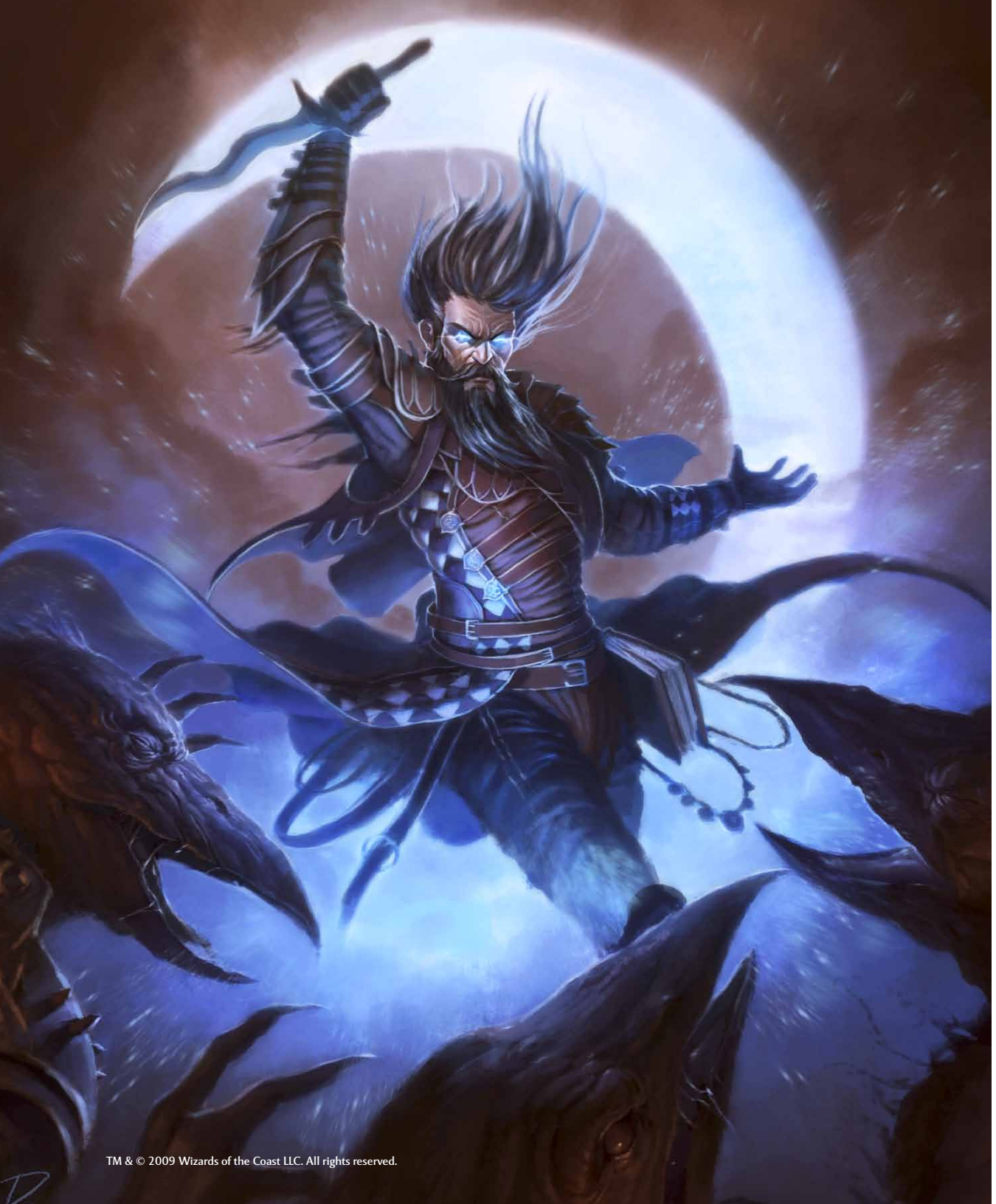
Jarring Assault — Warlord Attack 13

Your fierce strike damages your foe's ability to fight back.

Encounter ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage.
Effect: The target takes a –2 penalty to attack rolls until the start of your next turn.
Inspiring Presence: If the target attacks an ally, the ally gains temporary hit points equal to your Charisma modifier before the attack hits or misses.
Resourceful Presence: The target's penalty to attack rolls equals your Intelligence modifier.

About the Author

Robert J. Schwalb is an award-winning game designer whose more recent work can be found in *Martial Power 2*, *Draconomicon 2*, and *Primal Power*. Robert lives in Tennessee.



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Sorcerer Essentials:

Arcana's Wild Card

By Rob Heinsoo
Illustrations by David Rapoza

"You stole the treasure, stinking kenku. Now take the moon!"

–Ezral, cosmic sorcerer

The Basics

The sorcerer is the D&D® game's classic freewheeling spellcaster, a deadly blaster capable of dealing striker-level damage, sometimes to many enemies at once. As a spellcaster whose power rises from natural talent and bloodline rather than careful study and arcane formulas, the sorcerer is the deliberate antithesis of the carefully buttoned-down wizard. A touch of wildness exists in every sorcerer, even when you opt for one of the more restrained sorcerer builds rather than the deliberately random chaos sorcerer. If you love riding your luck on the scorched edge and making things go boom in the flashiest way possible, the sorcerer is for you.

Spell Source

Classes such as the fighter and the barbarian have a number of significant class features common to every member of the class. The sorcerer is constructed differently, possessing a single class feature called Spell Source. As of now, you have four possible choices for your Spell Source: Wild Magic, Cosmic Magic, Dragon Magic, and Storm Magic. Each of the Spell Source options provides a number of subfeatures that define the build.

Most of the features provided by the different Spell Source options are so distinct that we'll address them later in this article in the discussion of the individual sorcerer builds. Some common elements exist, including orientation toward close or ranged attacks and a damage type resistance feature expressed differently in each build.

Close Striker, Ranged Striker

Two of the Spell Source options, Cosmic Magic and Dragon Magic, point you toward fighting in close proximity to your enemies. You don't function as a front-line melee fighter (at least not until you've sampled the powers available later in this article), but you are well-defended enough to enjoy fighting near the front ranks with a variety of close attacks.

The other two Spell Source options, Wild Magic and Storm Magic, strongly suggest that you fight more like a ranged attacker, standing out of the general melee to attack with ranged and area attacks.

Sorcerer's Resistance

Each of the four Spell Source options express sorcery's powerful connection with arcane energy by providing resistance to at least one type of damage. Each Spell Source provides resistance that matches the flavor of that source and the mechanics typical of that sorcerer build. Dragon Magic allows you to choose one of six damage types, each associated with the breath weapons of one of the most familiar dragon types. Cosmic Magic's ongoing phases provide changing resistances as you change phase during a fight. Wild Magic embraces randomness by determining a single damage resistance randomly after each extended rest. Storm Magic provides two resistances: the lightning and thunder of the storm.

Resistance Is Not Passive

If your sorcerer's resistance was only a passive defense, it wouldn't have much bearing on the way you build and develop your character. But the resistance provided to each sorcerer as part of the Spell Source feature carries offensive punch. By merging a damage type with your magic, you also ensure that you can deal damage more reliably against creatures that can resist that damage type.

In terms of offense, an ability that helps penetrate another creature's resistance is great for your effectiveness as a striker. As long as you can choose a couple of powers that reliably deal damage to match your own resistance, you can deal damage on a regular basis to any enemy instead of getting tripped up by the resistances that occasionally thwart other spellcasters. Of course, some monsters have resistances that are too high to overcome, so focusing exclusively on one damage type is typically a bad idea. At the very least, pick at-will attacks that deal different types of damage. It also doesn't hurt to explore feat or other options that increase your ability to overcome your specialized damage type, such as Improved Dragon Soul (if you're a Dragon Magic sorcerer).

On the other hand, your ability to penetrate specific resistances means that you have to be somewhat more careful around your allies. Some of your close or area powers target only enemies, but many affect all creatures in the burst or blast area. A tiefling ally could ordinarily expect to take 5 fewer damage from the blast of your at-will *burning spray*, but if you're a dragon sorcerer who opted to emulate the red or gold dragons' fiery nature, or a chaos sorcerer who rolled fire resistance after your last extended rest, your *burning spray* attack can punch through your ally's fire resistance as easily as the enemy's fire resistance.

Implements

Both your implements, the dagger and the staff, are dual-use, in the sense that a character can use them as implements or as melee weapons. You use them mainly as spellcasting implements, but in the not-infrequent occasions when you're in the middle of melee and have the chance to make an opportunity attack, the dagger and staff function well. Particularly if you are a dragon or cosmic sorcerer, with Strength as a prioritized ability, you might find that opportunity attacks with a magic staff dealing 1d8 + your Strength modifier + the item's enhancement bonus can put a hitch-step into an enemy's willingness to maneuver around your spellcaster.

If you're a chaos or storm sorcerer, Strength-based opportunity attacks become less and less relevant as you increase in level. Depending on the dynamics of your adventuring party, the Melee Training feat from *Player's Handbook® 2* might be worth a look, turning your melee basic attacks into attacks based on your Charisma instead of a physical aspect.

Staff or Dagger?

As the sorcerer's implement of choice, the staff has marked advantages over the dagger, both as a spell-casting implement and as a potential melee weapon. As an implement used by at least one other striker class (the druid) and a couple controllers (wizard, invoker), the staff offers a full arsenal of choices. Dagger-wielding sorcerers have fewer choices. Four dagger-only enchantments are in *Player's Handbook 2*, but only a few of the various enchantments that you can apply to light blades are of much use to the implement-wielding sorcerer. A couple of new magic daggers appear in this article, and they go on to point out reasons the dagger might be a better choice for some sorcerers. Plus, the sorcerer melee weapon powers later in this article are meant to work for you whether you're using a dagger or a staff.

Light Blade Enchantments for Daggers

Before moving on to a closer look at at-will attacks, let's look at one easy-to-overlook section of the magic item list that has the potential to interest some sorcerers who'd rather fight with a dagger than a staff. Daggers are part of the light blade group. All the enchantments that can apply to light blades can apply to daggers, so in theory, sorcerers have a much wider pool out of which to fish magic daggers than the handful in *Player's Handbook 2*.

Of course, most enchantments that apply to light blades are oriented toward melee combatants. Most of the exceptions—the light blades meant to appeal to arcane characters—are aimed at swordmages and bards, interacting directly with features possessed by those classes. Other weapons have properties that are broadly useful to any character but not any more relevant to you as a sorcerer than to any other character.

A couple of worthwhile exceptions provide light-blade-wielding sorcerers with various advantages. For example, *mordant weapon* at 8th level (see *King of the Trollhaunt Warrens*) and *radiant weapon* at 15th have properties that allow you to turn all damage dealt with the item into acid, poison, or radiant damage. A dragon sorcerer who has chosen acid or poison as his resistance could use a *mordant weapon* to have the option of turning the damage dealt by his dagger implement's attacks to those two damage types. Similarly, a cosmic sorcerer who spends a good deal of time in *phase of the stars* could use a *radiant weapon* dagger to change the damage dealt by his or her spells to radiant damage. Using the *mordant weapon* property is entirely at your option.

Another above-average dagger choice is a *mithren-dain steel weapon,* which adds distance to every teleport. That is especially useful for cosmic sorcerers during phase of the stars.

Other useful dagger properties aren't as obvious. If the dagger doesn't require you to hit with a melee attack, it's a likely option for a sorcerer. Two favorites are the *jagged dagger* (increases your critical hit range to 19–20 with all powers) and the *bloodiron dagger* (deal the hefty d10 per enhancement bonus critical hit damage twice). A *bloodthirsty dagger* is another decent choice; it gives you a bump to attacks and damage roughly half the time you're in combat, since you receive the benefits against bloodied foes.

The variety of powers available in light blade items isn't nearly as wide as the daily powers available in staffs. A couple of light blades stand out in terms of powers, however. What chaos sorcerer can truly resist the *gambler's weapon,* which allows you to roll a d6, subtract 3, and apply the result, positive or negative, as a modifier on the attack you are making? If you're playing a chaos sorcerer, you probably think of the dice as your friends, so *gambler's weapon* is another way of deepening the relationship. If that's not your style, consider the *tooth of chaos* as a chaos sorcerer. Having control once a day on the even-odd status of your d20 roll can be pretty handy.

At-Will Attacks

Sorcerer at-will attacks fall into three groups:

- Four excellent at-will attacks that work even better for sorcerers with a specific magic source
- Two at-will attacks that can be used as ranged basic attacks
- Two generic at-will attacks that work equally well for any sorcerer

In this section, we'll discuss principles to guide selection of your sorcerer's at-will attacks, saving detailed discussion of most of the basic attacks for the character build sections below.

The sorcerer's at-will attacks cover the gamut, including attacks against each of the three defenses, damage of many types, several ranged attacks, a close blast, and even an area burst 1. Each of these factors matters and can be enough to sway you toward an unusual choice because of a desire to maximize your access to a damage type or a particular range. If you can pick only two at-will attacks, your strongest considerations should be your build's advantages and whether you care about having a ranged basic attack. If you're playing a human, you're in luck, because the versatility of a sorcerer's at-will attacks makes a human's bonus at-will attack power extremely worthwhile.

The four attacks that correspond to the magic source builds each merit serious consideration even when you do *not* have the build that makes a particular attack better. The at-will attack that corresponds to your build is guaranteed to be the best at-will attack option available to you.

Assuming you choose the attack that works better for your build, the next question is whether you care about having an at-will sorcerer attack that you can use as a ranged basic attack. If your party has no leader or has a leader who lacks powers that grant allies free basic attacks (such as a cleric), you won't care about this option. Take a harder look at the other at-will options available.

But if your party has a leader whose powers sometimes provide allies with free basic attacks (such as a warlord, bard, or shaman), choosing either *acid orb* or *dragonfrost* enables you to take advantage of the bonus. Aside from specific build considerations, *acid orb* is probably more attractive than *dragonfrost*, since *acid orb* has a range of 20 instead of range 10, it targets Reflex instead of monsters' occasionally overpumped Fortitude, and *acid orb* even deals slightly more damage instead of pushing 1 square.

The at-will attack appearing later in this article provides another choice for a power that can function as a ranged basic attack. *Energy strobe* involves a random roll for damage type that also provides a small amount of resistance to that damage if you hit. I should mention this resistance is not like the resistance provided by the Magic Source feature—it doesn't help your own attacks penetrate enemy resistance.

The truth is that you are spoiled for choice. *All* the sorcerer at-will attacks can be quite useful.

Feats

Feats that are most relevant to a particular build of sorcerer are discussed in the individual build sections later in the article, and feats mentioned below should be of interest to most any sorcerer.

Let's start with the no-brainer: Implement Expertise from *Player's Handbook 2* gives you a +1 bonus to attack rolls with your chosen implement. The other feat many sorcerers enjoy is Arcane Spellfury, which provides another +1 bonus to attack rolls until the end of your next turn against targets you hit with an at-will attack. That one requires more tactical consideration, and it fades a bit at higher levels when you have more encounter and daily powers from which to choose in your arsenal.

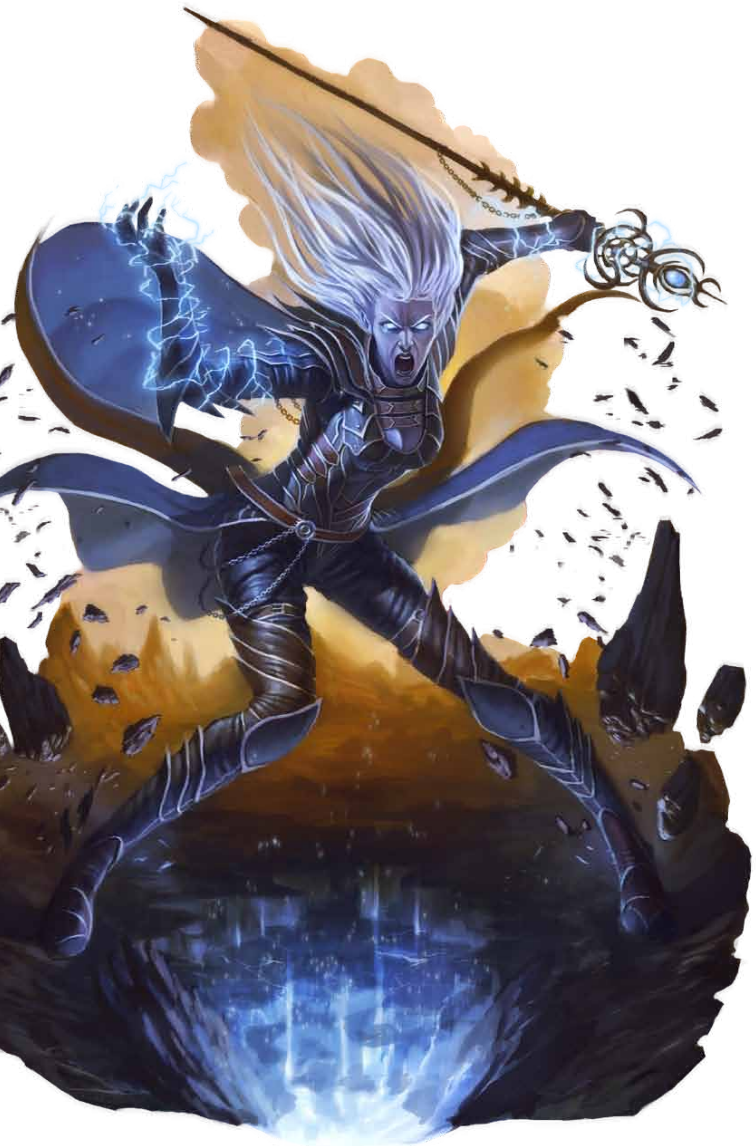
Other sorcerer feats are useful but less mandatory. Focusing Spellfury and Rising Spellfury are yin/yang-style feats that encourage you to attack with one form of at-will attack, then switch to the other. When you use attacks such as *burning spray* and *blazing starfall* to hit at least two enemies with the same at-will attack, Focusing Spellfury encourages you to follow up with a ranged or melee attack as your next attack, giving that attack a +2 bonus to the damage roll. Rising Spellfury returns the favor, saying that if you hit only one enemy with an at-will attack, you receive a +1 bonus to your attack roll with close and area attacks until the end of your next turn—against all the targets in the spell's area! This effect makes Rising Spellfury potentially more useful, barring build specialties, since its benefit kicks in against more foes.

Our earlier discussion of the sorcerer's dagger implement saved one relevant data point until now: The Sorcerous Blade Channeling feat allows you to use any of your ranged sorcerer attacks as melee attacks, as long as you make the attack using a dagger. Such attacks aren't weapon attacks; they're still implement attacks targeting one of the non-AC defenses. With Sorcerous Blade Channeling, you don't have to worry about trying to shift away from attackers to attack with one of your powerful ranged attacks. You might also gain an accuracy boost thanks to combat advantage from flanking with an ally. And speaking of implements, Dual Implement Spellcaster is an excellent choice for the sorcerer. Your DM might not go for a dual-staff wielder, but dual daggers? That's a choice worth considering for the extra damage boost from an off-hand implement.

Sorcerers have a number of close range powers, so whether you're using Sorcerous Blade Channeling or not, you might also want to consider Armor Proficiency (leather). It's the most AC bang for your buck among the armor proficiency feats, since the difference between cloth and leather is +2 AC.

At the paragon tier, the War Wizardry feat, from the *Forgotten Realms® Player's Guide*, is a choice that can have all your fellow players cheering, since you have penalties to hit and deal half damage at most to allies in your area spells. Arcane Reach is another fine choice. At the epic tier, other than the usual solid choices (such as Epic Resurgence and Robust Defenses), Sorcerous Flux is a fine choice.

Finally, remember that as a sorcerer, your implement—whether staff or dagger—is also a weapon. So feats such as Weapon Focus work with your implement attacks. It also means that you have interesting multiclass options. Taking Sneak of Shadows to multiclass into rogue means you can sneak attack once per encounter with your sorcerer powers if you use a dagger as an implement.



Race

The sorcerer class mechanics and the racial ability bonuses mix well. All the Charisma-bonus races feel like fine sorcerers—no class/race combo that is mechanically suited for the class feels odd as a role-playing choice for a sorcerer.

Dragonborn are the iconic dragon sorcerers and do equally well as cosmic sorcerers. Halflings and drow feel perfect as chaos sorcerers and can also play well as storm sorcerers. Half-elves, tieflings, gnomes, and humans make fine sorcerers of any build.

Ability Scores

Charisma is your key ability. The other ability scores have varying degrees of relevance, as detailed below.

Strength: Sorcerers aren't cerebral. You're a visceral magician, pushing magic into place with physical effort, not with theorems and spellbooks. If you're a cosmic sorcerer or a dragon sorcerer, Strength is your secondary ability score, boosting your Magic Source features and most of the Dragon Magic riders that accompany your at-will, encounter, and daily spells. As a chaos or storm sorcerer, you can afford to ignore Strength; few sorcerer spells draw on your Strength modifier *outside* the Cosmic Magic and Dragon Magic riders, so if you don't qualify for those bonuses, you don't care.

Constitution: You should boost one of the abilities within the Fortitude pair. If you're a cosmic or dragon sorcerer, you should boost Strength. If you're a chaos or storm sorcerer, Constitution is probably a better choice.

Dexterity: As the secondary ability for chaos sorcerers and storm sorcerers, high Dexterity fuels both your Magic Source class features and riders for

RACE AND BUILD

Deva	Cosmic Sorcerer
Doppelganger	Chaos Sorcerer
Dragonborn	Dragon Sorcerer
Drow	Chaos Sorcerer
Dwarf	Cosmic Sorcerer
Eladrin	Chaos Sorcerer
Elf	Chaos Sorcerer
Genasi	Storm Sorcerer
Gnoll	Chaos Sorcerer
Gnome	Chaos Sorcerer
Goliath	Dragon Sorcerer
Half-elf	Storm Sorcerer
Half-Orc	Chaos Sorcerer
Halfling	Chaos Sorcerer
Human	Chaos Sorcerer
Kalashtar	Storm Sorcerer
Minotaur	Dragon Sorcerer
Shadar-Kai	Storm Sorcerer
Longtooth Shifter	Dragon Sorcerer
Razorclaw Shifter	Chaos Sorcerer
Revenant	Chaos Sorcerer
Tiefling	Storm Sorcerer
Warforged	Dragon Sorcerer

powers closely associated with your build. Cosmic sorcerers and dragon sorcerers are free to ignore Dexterity since both possess features that allow them to use their Strength modifier instead of their Dexterity or Intelligence modifier to calculate AC. No sorcerer class skills rely on Dexterity. In other words, if you're a cosmic or dragon sorcerer choosing between Dexterity and Intelligence as an ability score to help your Reflex from resembling that of a dungeon door, choose Dexterity if you value initiative.

Intelligence: Choose Intelligence if you value the Arcana and History skills over initiative. Otherwise there's not much point in a high Intelligence. It's as if you're doing everything you can to avoid being like your wizard cousins.

Wisdom: Since your Charisma score is going to be high, you can downplay Wisdom unless your character concept involves prowess with a few of your class skills: Dungeoneering, Insight, and Nature.

Charisma: A sorcerer without Charisma? No such thing. Charisma is your primary attack ability, contributes to most every power, and sets you up with a high Will. Three useful skills feed off Charisma, so you can choose whether you're a skilled bluffer, an intimidator, a diplomat, or all three as the seasons require.

Sorcerer Builds

Different sorcerers offer markedly different play experiences.

Wild at Heart: The chaos sorcerer emphasizes randomness to a unique degree. If you enjoy adjusting for uncertainty and think of dice as your friend, the chaos sorcerer is for you. If you hate additional die rolls and always want to plan things out in advance, look elsewhere.

Deliberate Sequences: The cosmic sorcerer features more variability than other classes, but the sorcerer's varying features arrive sequentially in encounter as a succession of phases. If you like the idea of controlling your character's change over time as you move through cosmic phases, you'll have fun playing the cosmic sorcerer, the sorcerer who functions as more of a controller than the other builds.

Front-Line Tough: The dragon sorcerer uses close attacks to fight in the thick of the battle. Short tactical movements, careful placement of devastating blasts, and a lot more durability than you'd expect from a cloth-armor wearing spellcaster—that's the dragon sorcerer's style.

Flash and Slash: Storm sorcerers deal striker-level damage to multiple targets and can defend themselves surprisingly well. They play something like a lightning and thunder pinwheel—a bit fragile, if it gets trapped, but foes find them deadly.

Chaos Sorcerer

"You fear chaos. That works for me."

Playing a chaos sorcerer, your first tier of accomplishment comes when you revel in creating unpredictable situations during play. Your second tier of accomplishment arrives when all the other players begin watching your attack rolls carefully, realizing the difference one of your odd or even rolls can make upon the battlefield. The third tier of accomplishment comes when you achieve control within chaos, understanding all the possible random consequences of your actions and attacks and setting yourself up to maximize the beneficial effects of any possible outcome. Yes, despite appearances, it is possible, and challenging, to be a control freak and play a chaos sorcerer.

Ability Scores

Charisma and Dexterity are your priorities. Before racial adjustments, your ability scores might look something like the following.

WILD ABILITY SPREAD

Score	Ability	Score	Ability	Score	Ability
10	STR Strength	14	DEX Dexterity	10	WIS Wisdom
11	CON Constitution	8	INT Intelligence	18	CHA Charisma

Powers and Feats

Chaos bolt is the at-will attack that turns every round into an adventure. If you keep rolling an even number on your d20, you keep hitting enemies until you run out of targets that haven't already been hit. The choice is open for your other at-will attack, although it's hard to find fault with the choice of *blazing starfall*.

Choose encounter powers that have Wild Magic riders, such as *bedeviling burst* or *mists of disarray*. For daily powers, you're a bit spoiled—you can either choose powers such as *dazzling ray* and *contagious curse* that have a wacky Wild Magic rider, powers such as *chromatic orb* and *prismatic explosion* that have entirely random results that aren't dependent on your

Wild Magic features, or the party-friendly *ice javelins*, which is solid all on its own.

If you want a bit more control of your random powers, take *focused chaos* as your 2nd-level utility power. Once per encounter you can change an odd result to an even result, or vice versa, ensuring that you make efficient use of your powers' side effects instead of randomly wasting them through an entire fight.

Similarly, as previously mentioned, the Disciplined Wild Soul feat allows you to roll twice when you're determining your Wild Soul resistance. Roll twice, then choose the energy option that best suits your power selection or the adventure you're about to face.

Rerolls are Good

If you're committed to milking your odd and even attack rolls for all they're worth, consider focusing on powers and magic items that provide you with rerolls. A reroll isn't only an opportunity to change a miss into a hit, it's a chance to have the odd or even result you need more.

Affordable magic items that can help you acquire rerolls start with *potions of clarity*. They drain a healing surge, but you likely have enough that you can spare one for the reroll you receive. If you want to fight with a dagger implement, try the *luckblade*, starting at 6th level, which allows you to reroll an attack as a daily power. At 13th level, the wondrous items called the *stone of flame* and the *stone of spirit* can provide a reroll for a fire and a psychic attack, respectively, and these are two attack keywords you're likely to have. You might even consider a *battle staff* from the *Eberron® Players Guide* if you've already decided Sorcerous Blade Channeling is for you.

Of course you have an easy way to receive a reroll as an encounter power, and it fits with the Wild Magic theme: Play an elf!

Cosmic Sorcerer

"I walk out of the sun, carry the moon, and swim among stars. Your spellbook would be cramped."

Control is the goal for a cosmic sorcerer. Not only do you function as something of a secondary controller, you also have to control your own phases.

The mindset for playing a cosmic sorcerer is akin to playing chess. You pick an opening, the cosmic phase you want to start the fight in. You pick it knowing that you might want to advance your phase later on, and that the tools at your disposal to advance one phase ahead include becoming bloodied and using a daily attack power. You're not likely to tailor your cosmic phase to perfectly match the demands of each encounter, but figuring out how to get close to the perfect midgame and endgame is the challenge you relish.

The core dynamic is that the first phase, phase of the sun, is inherently offensive, dealing fire and radiant damage to adjacent enemies. The second phase is defensive. Phase of the moon provides an AC bonus that grows larger for every enemy adjacent to you. The third phase, phase of the stars, offers the opportunity to teleport whenever an enemy's attack misses you as a free action. Since even a missed opportunity attack can enable the free action teleport, you might have the opportunity to teleport into position for your own close attack.

Ability Scores

Charisma and Strength matter to you. The rest is dross. Your abilities might start something like the following before you add racial adjustments.

COSMIC ABILITY SPREAD

Score	Ability	Score	Ability	Score	Ability
14	STR Strength	10	DEX Dexterity	10	WIS Wisdom
11	CON Constitution	8	INT Intelligence	18	CHA Charisma

Powers and Feats

Choose *blazing starfall* as your first at-will area attack. It creates a short-lived damage zone that can discourage enemy movement.

The encounter and daily powers with Cosmic Magic riders suit you, but your various phases offer so many resistance/damage options that many other powers make good choices. Close burst or close blast powers are some of the best options, though, since they allow you to capitalize on Soul of the Cosmic Cycle regardless of your current phase. You're playing this character because you like weighing every option.

Of the feats that speak directly to your build, Student of the Cosmos allows you to function as a low-grade jack-of-all-skills, providing skill bonuses depending on your cosmic phase. It appears to be most useful for phase of the sun initiative bonuses and phase of the moon Bluff bonuses. The Stealth bonus in phase of the moon is nice, but you're not likely to be a Stealth specialist unless you're multiclassing (and as a secondary Strength build sorcerer, your Dexterity won't be all that great in most cases anyway).

At epic tier, your control increases if you take Master of the Cosmic Cycle, which allows you to choose your new phase each time you change phases instead of advancing one ahead.

Dragon Sorcerer

"Now you've made me ANGRY!"

Unlike most strikers, you grow tougher as you take damage. You start with high AC already, thanks to Draconic Resilience. When you are bloodied, the Scales of the Dragon feature gives you +2 AC until the end of the encounter. It's seldom wise to refuse healing when it's offered, but if you're on the edge of being bloodied and the threat looks low, you might ask the leader in your party to delay.

Ability Scores

Your ability scores have the same demands as the cosmic sorcerer: Charisma first, Strength second, with the rest trailing behind.

DRAGON ABILITY SPREAD

SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY
14	STR Strength	10	DEX Dexterity	10	WIS Wisdom
11	CON Constitution	8	INT Intelligence	18	CHA Charisma

Powers and Feats

If you want to play an arcanist who specializes in a specific damage type, being a dragon sorcerer and choosing fire as the damage type that corresponds to your Dragon Soul is a strong move. You can then select *burning spray* to maximize its Dragon Magic rider and pair it with *arcing fire*, a fire keyword at-will attack that was released with the *D&D Miniatures* set *Player's Handbook Heroes: Series 1*, and is now available through the D&D Character Builder on *D&D Insider*. Other classes would be making a mistake by choosing two fire powers as at-wills, but your fire powers can penetrate 5 points of fire resistance per tier thanks to Dragon Soul, or 7 points if you take the Improved Dragon Soul feat. If you're dragonborn, you're not only tapping into a strong story theme, you can also take fire as your breath weapon type and the Draconic Spellcaster feat, which gives you a +1 bonus to attack rolls when you cast fire spells. This combo works with any damage type. If you do specialize, make sure you keep a couple of powers in reserve that don't deal your chosen damage type. It's no fun to be the fire sorcerer when you have to fight a fire giant.

But being an energy-specialized dragon sorcerer isn't your only option. Again, as a dragonborn, Draconic Arrogance, a paragon feat, combined with a large number of the powers that push an enemy or knock it prone, allows you to deal more damage to those foes. The *dragonfrost* power becomes a great choice if you go this route, giving you an at-will push attack.

For extra resilience, take the True Dragon's Soul feat so that your other three defenses also increase by 1 when you are first bloodied in an encounter. Then at paragon tier take Draconic Spellfury and gain temporary hit points every time you hit with a sorcerer at-will attack.

Storm Sorcerer

"Finno! Get out of the way or start praying. I'm going to hit them all."

As a storm sorcerer you have a little bit of everything. Of course your offensive powers are strongest—you're the option for players who want to play an all-out offensive sorcerer striker without the randomness of the chaos sorcerer build. You have the potential for a quick defensive boost thanks to Storm Soul and the potential for quick mobility from Storm's Embrace. This build lends itself quite well to a flavor of sorcerer that acts as a living embodiment of the storm. You can pick plenty of thunder or lightning power, relying on your ability to pierce two defenses in the off chance you fight a monster that resists one of these damage types.

Ability Scores

Like the chaos sorcerer, you need Charisma and Dexterity. Your ability scores could look like the following before applying racial bonuses.

STORM ABILITY SPREAD

SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY
10	STR Strength	14	DEX Dexterity	10	WIS Wisdom
11	CON Constitution	8	INT Intelligence	18	CHA Charisma

Powers and Feats

You should choose *lightning strike* as your first at-will attack. Its ability to spread damage across multiple enemies with only one attack roll might help you eliminate minions or soften up targets your allies are facing. As your second at-will attack, you might be

tempted away from the ranged basic attack powers to take *storm walk*. Although it targets Fortitude, which can sometimes be problematic, it deals thunder damage to synchronize with your Storm Soul feature. Another great at-will option for the storm sorcerer, as with most any sorcerer, is *blazing starfall*. Few classes have access to an area at-will attack, and most of those classes are controllers.

For the storm sorcerer, no feats have clear superiority over others. At paragon tier, you probably want the mobility afforded by Storm Spellfury, which allows you to fly 2 squares after hitting with an at-will attack power. Earlier in your career, you can take a small damage bump from Tempest Magic, an upgraded version of the earlier Raging Storm feat. However you can take it only if you have a Constitution of at least 13 as well as Dexterity 13. Constitution 13 isn't out of the question, but if you've maximized the ability scores that matter instead of rolling your abilities, you're not likely to have it unless you're playing a dwarf, dragonborn, or other race that has a Constitution bonus.

Many of the strongest and most fun sorcerer powers deal thunder damage, lightning damage, or both. *Thunder leap*, while good for all sorcerers, is now thematically tied to your build. At the paragon tier, *lightning daggers* is a fantastic daily that gives you an attack as a free action for an entire combat. And *primordial storm* has nearly every damage type known in D&D, making it another great pick. Combine these powers with magic items or utilities that allow you to fly (such as the level 16 utility *dominant winds*), and you have a pretty cool—and potent—themed storm sorcerer.

Magic Items

We've already discussed various magic items that can help sorcerers. Now let's add a couple daggers for the chaos and dragon builds and a magic tattoo apiece for each of the builds.

Daggers

The *dragonscale dagger* heightens the dragon sorcerer's offense when his or her defense is enhanced by Scales of the Dragon. The *wild flare dagger* allows the chaos sorcerer to pass on a bonus saving throw you don't need to do a bit more damage to your enemies.

Dragonscale Dagger **Level 3+**

The dagger isn't literally a dragon scale, but it's shaped like one and its magic kicks in when your Dragon Magic snarls into force after you are bloodied.

Lvl 3	+1	680 gp	Lvl 18	+4	85,000 gp
Lvl 8	+2	3,400 gp	Lvl 23	+5	425,000 gp
Lvl 13	+3	17,000 gp	Lvl 28	+6	2,125,000 gp

Weapon: Dagger
Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls
Critical: +1d6 damage per plus
Property: When your dragon sorcerer Scales of the Dragon feature triggers, you also get a +1 item bonus to attack rolls with melee and close attacks using this dagger until the end of your next turn.

Wild Flare Dagger **Level 2+**

Sparking with barely controlled wild magic, this multi-hued dagger sends unpredictable spikes of energy into your enemies.

Lvl 2	+1	520 gp	Lvl 17	+4	65,000 gp
Lvl 7	+2	2,600 gp	Lvl 22	+5	325,000 gp
Lvl 12	+3	13,000 gp	Lvl 27	+6	1,625,000 gp

Weapon: Dagger
Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls
Critical: +1d6 damage per plus
Power (Encounter): Free Action. Use this power when your chaos sorcerer chaos burst feature would give you a saving throw because of an odd attack roll. You can forgo the saving throw to deal extra damage equal to the weapon's enhancement bonus to the first target of the attack.

Tattoos

As explained in *Adventurer's Vault™ 2*, no character can have more than one magic tattoo at a time. Two new tattoos of heart and two new tattoos of spirit follow. Many of the tattoos of spirit contained in *Adventurer's Vault* 2 are also perfect for sorcerers.

Chaos Burst Tattoo **Level 9**

This tattoo of spirit changes its appearance in a chaotic welter. On good days, it matches your complexion. On bad days it doesn't match anything, anywhere.

Wondrous Item 4,200 gp
Property: When you spend an action point to take an extra action that you use for an attack, your chaos sorcerer Chaos Burst feature triggers on the first attack roll of that attack, even if it has already triggered this turn. The AC bonus granted by this Chaos Burst increases to +3 until the start of your next turn, and if the roll instead allows you to make a saving throw, you gain a +2 bonus to that saving throw.

Cosmic Cycle Tattoo — Level 6

The sun, moon, and stars wind around your chest in this tattoo of heart, flaring into motion when you use the tattoo's power.

Wondrous Item 1,800 gp
Property: If you have the Cosmic Magic sorcerer class feature, when you use your second wind, you can choose to change your phase to the next higher-numbered phase.

Dragon Sorcery Tattoo — Level 9

Your chosen dragon coils around your heart and neck until you take a moment to recover your strength—the dragon's breath roars against your foes!

Wondrous Item 4,200 gp
Property: When you use your second wind, deal 5 damage of the same type that you resist with your Dragon Soul resistance to each enemy within 5 squares of you.

Storm Torc Tattoo — Level 8

Pulsing with blue lightning, this tattoo of spirit summons the winds.

Wondrous Item 3,400 gp
Property: When you spend an action point to make an attack, you can use your storm sorcerer Storm's Embrace feature if the natural attack roll is a 16 or higher.

SORCERER SPELLS

Energy strobe joins *dragonfrost* and *acid orb* as a power that a sorcerer can use as a ranged basic attack. The rest of the attack powers provide sorcerers with melee power options.

Energy Strobe — Sorcerer Attack 1

As a beam of energy lances from your hand or eyes, part of it swirls around you as a temporary flickering shield.

At-Will ✦ Arcane, Implement; Varies
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One creature
Attack: Charisma vs. Reflex
Hit: 1d10 + Charisma modifier damage. Roll a d6 to determine the attack's damage type. You gain resist 5 against the type of damage your attack deals until the end of your next turn.
1. Cold
2. Fire
3. Force
4. Lightning
5. Radiant
6. Thunder

Level 21: 2d10 + Charisma modifier damage.
Special: You can use this power as a ranged basic attack.

Teleport Bash — Sorcerer Attack 3

A sharp blow from your staff or dagger sends your foe flickering through the gaps between worlds. When they emerge, they erupt in thunder.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Implement, Teleportation, Thunder
Standard Action **Melee** 1
Target: One creature
Attack: Charisma vs. Fortitude
Hit: 1d8 + Charisma modifier damage, and roll a d6 to determine the distance you must teleport the creature. It must be teleported that many squares away from its original location. After the teleport, all creatures adjacent to the target take 5 thunder damage.
Chaos Sorcerer: You can choose to roll a d4, a d6, or a d8 for the distance of the teleport effect.

One Blow, One Echo — Sorcerer Attack 7

A simple stab or smash is never simple when its echo can spiral through your magic and blossom in fire or thunder.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Implement; Varies
Standard Action **Melee** 1
Target: One creature
Attack: Charisma vs. Reflex
Hit: 1d10 + Charisma modifier damage, and roll a d6 to determine the damage type. At the start of your next turn, deal 10 damage of the same type to one enemy within 3 squares of you.
1. Acid
2. Cold
3. Fire
4. Lightning
5. Poison
6. Thunder

Thunder and Strike — Sorcerer Attack 13

Your surprise melee blow drives the enemy away in thunder, as a lightning strike blasts a distant foe.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Implement, Lightning, Thunder
Standard Action **Melee** 1
Primary Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Charisma vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d8 + Charisma modifier thunder damage, and you push the target a number of squares equal to 1 + your Strength modifier.
Effect: You make a secondary ranged attack. This attack does not provoke opportunity attacks.
Secondary Target: One creature within 10 squares of you other than the primary target
Secondary Attack: Charisma vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d8 + Charisma modifier lightning damage. In addition, if the secondary target is adjacent to the primary target, the secondary target is dazed until the end of your next turn.

Rippling Strike — Sorcerer Attack 17

Your slash opens a psychic connection. The spell seals the connection in pain.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Implement, Psychic
Standard Action **Melee** 1
Target: One creature
Attack: Charisma vs. Will
Hit: 2d8 + Charisma modifier damage, and one enemy within 5 squares of the target takes 10 psychic damage. If no other enemy creature is within 5 squares, this attack deals 1d8 extra damage to the target instead.
Cosmic Sorcerer: If this attack reduces one or more enemies to 0 hit points, choose an enemy within 5 squares not damaged by the attack. That enemy takes 10 psychic damage.

Shuffling Thunder — Sorcerer Attack 23

A blow from your staff unseals the walls between worlds. Thunderous magic announces your arrival and the arrival of the enemy you have teleported.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Implement, Teleportation, Thunder
Standard Action **Melee** 1
Target: One creature
Attack: Charisma vs. Fortitude
Hit: 3d8 + Charisma modifier damage, and roll a d6. You must teleport the target that distance, and you can teleport yourself that distance. After the teleport, every creature adjacent to you and every creature adjacent to the target takes 10 thunder damage.
Chaos Sorcerer: You can choose to roll a d4, d6, d8, or d10 for the distance of the teleport effect.

Sorcerous Echo — Sorcerer Attack 27

What seems like a relatively weak slash of your dagger turns into a blossom of acid or lightning, erupting on a foe of your choice.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Implement; Varies
Standard Action **Melee** 1
Target: One creature
Attack: Charisma vs. Reflex
Hit: 3d10 + Charisma modifier damage, and roll a d6 to determine the damage type. At the start of your next turn, deal 15 damage of the same type to each enemy within 3 squares of you.

1. Acid
2. Cold
3. Fire
4. Lightning
5. Poison
6. Thunder

About the Author

Rob Heinsoo is a senior designer at Wizards of the Coast and the lead designer of the 4th Edition *Dungeons & Dragons*® Roleplaying Game. He also designed the *Three-Dragon Ante*™ and *Inn-Fighting*™ card games.

Power Gaming, or Not

The Essentials series tries to include a great deal of character-building advice as well as tactical advice for playing one of these characters at the table. But the series is not intended to provide the most recent optimization options for your character. Rather, the goal of these articles is to give you the basics you need to play one of these classes if you've never done so before.

We fully recognize that those of you who enjoy an optimized character might find this advice lacking, so we encourage you to seek out our character optimization boards in the community forums. There you'll find a plethora of advice for making your character the cream of the crop.

We also recognize that much of the advice we have to offer is the opinion of the author. As such, consider it one side of the many that each character class has the potential to offer the game. If you think you have better advice for building one of these characters, please send us your article pitch at submissions@wizards.com.

Performing the Pact

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"Spare me your warnings, old man . . . I am tired of your lessons. I am about to make a deal that'll give me more power than a thousand of your moldering libraries can hold."
–Brekk Vellus, to his wizard mentor before his acceptance of the infernal pact

The warlock's patron is a figure of mystery and power, lurking in the fringes of legend. Each patron, be it greedy devil or bewitching fey, is as unique as the warlocks with which it forms pacts. Some were present at the world's making; others made themselves through the working of eldritch magic. They might be figures of awe or furtive subtlety. They take heed of worldly events, some seeking power, some secrets, some revenge, but all share one thing—the willingness to imbue mortals with their ancient magic.

Think of your patron as a vital component of your background story. Your patron and the pact it provides shape your character's style and origins, but this influence doesn't normally appear in adventures. This article broadens the idea of how much your character draws upon the pact and is molded by it by showing you how to design a fully realized patron; the companion article, "Sealing the Pact," can give your DM ideas for how to create adventures using your patron. You can find details for each of the five pacts below, as well as sample patrons along with new feats and backgrounds, which allow you to widen the scope of your most distinguishing feature: your pact.

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Designing Your Patron

Creating your patron is an exciting process. Although your character is bound by the rules of the game, your patron has no restrictions. Let your imagination run wild—create an entity of fantastic history, scope, and power. You don't have to calculate combat stats for your patron; rather, you are creating a supportive character for your warlock. The patron plays an intimate role in the warlock's story—for good or ill—with distinctive traits unique to your pact.

Collaborate with your DM to develop your patron and find ways to include it in the campaign. Consider each of the following, remembering that these details should be open-ended so that your DM can expand your ideas to create mystery for you and your character.

The Nature of Patrons

When crafting your patron, keep in mind that patrons are entities of untouchable power. Sample monsters are listed for each pact to use as a thematic starting point. Although they might appear superficially similar to lesser versions of these monsters, patrons are legendary specimens, similar to unique figures in myths or fairy tales. They are figures of wonder, mystery, and dread.

Some warlocks prefer a different kind of pact, where the "pact" is instead a brazen manipulation of lesser entities, such as imps, fey, or other minor spirits. Individually, the powers that these creatures possess is minuscule compared to the patrons in this article, but in numbers they can make you a match for other warlocks. If you prefer this aesthetic, use the steps in this article to give the creatures an origin, goals, and so on. Perhaps have the creatures be bound thralls stolen from one of the patrons presented.

Most patrons are unaligned, but many are clearly evil. Good-aligned patrons are less common. If your character is evil or unaligned, consider the possibility of a good-aligned patron for an interesting twist on iconic themes.

Your Warlock's Pact

Your pact is an agreement between you and your patron for an exchange of services, information, and power. What you bring to the offering table is up to your imagination, but it should be inspired by your patron and be intimately important to you. Perhaps you offered a lifetime of assistance to the patron's goals, or the surrendering of your worldly possessions. Maybe your patron demands blood sacrifice, forcing you to commit questionable acts in return for arcane blessing.

The pact is frequently symbolic, but it can be a real, binding contract, as is the case with many infernal patrons. Most patrons don't relinquish their knowledge without a heavy toll—one you might pay with interest. Patrons can be manipulative or mysterious creatures, and their pact with you is one bargain they demand honoring.

Origin

Patrons have storied backgrounds. They might be known throughout the world, having made pacts with warlocks of different races and cultures. Some are worshiped as gods, feared as villains, or honored as saviors. Design an origin and legacy for your patron, finding ways for them to have played roles in events of the campaign setting's past. Your DM might expand on the patron's origins considerably to create mystery or drama.

Goals

Although powerful, a patron needs something from you. Some seek power or secrets, others the destruction of rivals or the protection of allies, and still others desire only the satisfaction of spreading their influence—good or evil. How could a pact with you help them accomplish these goals? Brainstorm the following goals for your patron.

Short-Term Goal: Something to accomplish at the start of the campaign to establish tone.

Major Goal: An important task stretching across tiers of play.

Open-Ended Goal: A motif that can carry throughout the campaign—such as protecting allied creatures.

Remember, you and your patron can have opposing goals if you prefer the idea of battling its influence. A patron's goals are the principle source of inspiration your DM uses when creating patron-themed adventures.

Interactions

Create a list of traits based on the patron's alignment and goals, remembering that a complex interaction between the patron's stated goals and actual goals might not be obvious. Find a balance of flaws and virtues; as an inhuman being of superior power, your patron's personality should be difficult to comprehend.

Next consider the role your patron plays in your life.

Ally: Your patron shares alignment, beliefs, or ideals with you. It might be a mentor or role model for you.

Antagonist: You and your patron's morality or beliefs fundamentally differ. This difference could make it a rival, a source of inner conflict, or an ongoing nemesis.

Meddler: Your patron doesn't care about much one way or the other, and it forms a pact with you because it suits its whims. Meddling patrons become foils, headaches, sources of spontaneity, or a good luck charm for you.

Regardless of its role, you can classify your patron's interactions with you into one of four types.

Deceptive: Your patron misleads or tricks you out of spite or for your own protection.

Hidden: The patron uses intermediaries, rarely—if ever—revealing its true identity.

Intimidating: Your patron's presence, identity, and authority over you are *very* clear.

Open: The patron appears directly and communicates without secrets.

Remember that your patron can also play a part in your companions' lives as well, so be careful that the patron's personality won't foster negativity among other players.

Contacting Your Patron

Patrons dwell beyond casual accessibility, with most living on other planes, but even those that exist in the world make it a point to protect their locations. Moreover, most don't care enough about you to respond to you at your whim. Some patrons might give you a method to contact them, but communication is never a trivial thing.

Communion Aesthetic: Work with the DM to create a unique, stylized way you and the patron can commune. This communion should be a storytelling device, not a resource for hints or assistance. Don't expect your patron to protect you beyond the powers you already possess. It won't sweep in and save the day.

Divinations: Change the nature of divination rituals so that it is your patron that is supplying guidance.

The Pact Boon

Your pact boon class feature is an easy way for you to make your patron's presence felt. Although you determine the boon by your choice of pact, you can change its flavor to something evocative of your patron. Find ways for the boon to fit into your story, and come up with a stylistic description of how it is manifested.

Reconciling Alignment

Patrons are, at best, perilous entities whose power and motives are beyond understanding; at worst, they're downright evil. How do you justify your pact? Why make a pact with a creature of opposing alignment? The answer can provide you with a complex, conflicted character. Incorporate your pact and its influence into your interactions within the game. Give careful thought to the choice of your character's background, and find ways you can use it to create an intriguing narrative for you and the other players.

Also, your character isn't the only person who has to reconcile your pact. If other characters in your party are aware of the source of your abilities, some of them might have qualms about working with your character. Their reservations about your character can create an interesting dynamic among the characters of your party, though you should be careful not to make it one so wrought with conflict that your party (and thus the game) falls apart. Work with your DM and your fellow players if you find that your choice of patron is causing issues or discomfort of any kind.

Pacts and Patrons

The following pacts and patrons can give you launching points for further developing your warlock's background.

Dark Pact

The dark pact leads you to ruthless warlock magic: powers that kill, maim, and betray for selfish gain. You see some exceptions, though. You might be the rare dark pact warlock who works toward good ends, using your power at a calculated cost.

Although dark pact magic has spread to the surface, the true masters of its arcane secrets remain in the Underdark. Whether drow, dark spirit, or creatures of terror, dark patrons lurk in the hidden places of the world.

Common Patrons: Demons (especially servants to Lolth), purple dragons, and legendary dark spirits of the Underdark such as Yorgrix

Sample Patron: Yorgrix, Weaver of the Poison Web

Waiting obscenely in the enveloping darkness, Yorgrix sits in its web of perpetual hunger and hatred.

Origin: For centuries this demonweb spider was the personal pet of a drow matron, securing her standing in drow society and in the eightfold eyes of Lolth. In the end, the matron's hubris led to her downfall. Arrogantly she flaunted her sorcery while Yorgrix waited in the darkness, watching. Its demonic nature allowed it to master the lethal subtleties of dark pact magic, and eventually the desire for power overcame it. In a night of slaughter that left no survivors, the spider gorged itself on all living creatures within the subterranean city. Swollen from ingesting its victims, Yorgrix grew too corpulent to pass through the city's gates, so it took up residence. Webs now drape every inch of the drow city, and suspended at the cavern's center is Yorgrix, forever waiting silently in demonic hunger. The spider has now become more like a dread spirit than a corporeal being, its city a place of mystery and death.

Goals: Yorgrix cares only for sustenance, suffering, and destruction. Its bloated size made escape impossible from its city-sized nest, but now Yorgrix and the city are connected in spirit. Maddening hunger makes Yorgrix—for all its terrifying power—desperate. It reaches out with its mind, offering to teach powers that can leave your enemies pleading for death. In return, you offer up the life force of your slain foes. You must offer food for Yorgrix by using your powers to torment enemies. The spider's evil followers make pilgrimages to the webbed city with captives for the demonweb spider.

Interaction: No mystery lurks within Yorgrix's tutelage; no secrets or subtle lessons come from it—pain is the focus. Yorgrix's instruction is suicidal for the weak. To the spider you are filth scraped from cavern walls, fit only for slavery or consumption.

Communication: Although you might not realize it, the skittering servants of Yorgrix watch you. Yorgrix uses them to relay its terrible commands from afar.

Pact Boon: The flare of your dark spiral comes from Yorgrix sinking its fangs into a writhing victim, channeling part of the consumed life force to you.

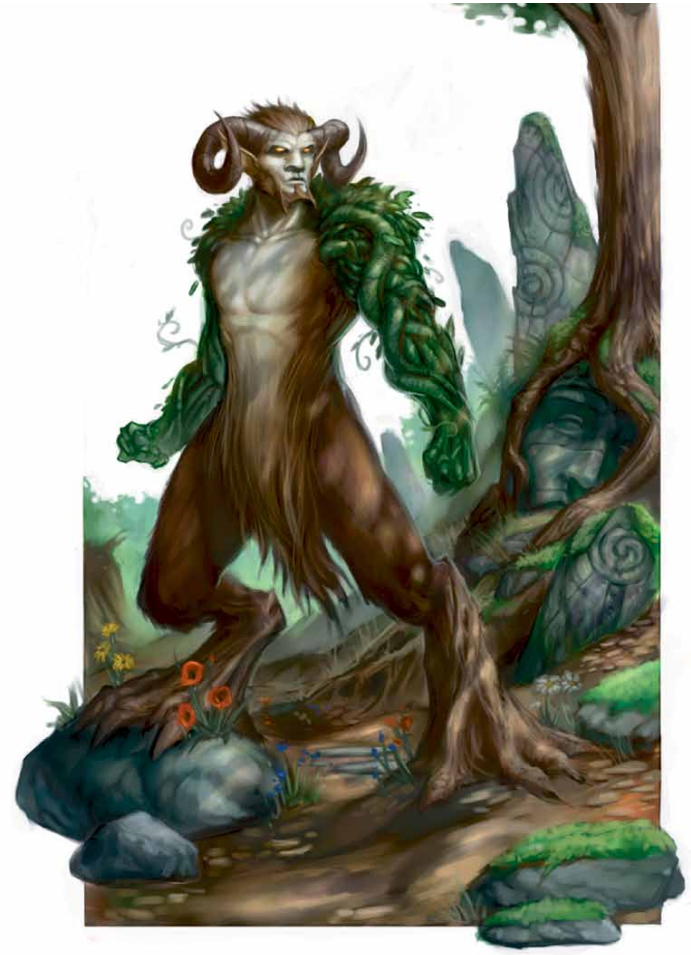
Roleplaying: Whether seeking Yorgrix for power, revenge, or naïve good intentions, you have the spider's venom forever burning in your veins. Is it out of fear, ambition, or bitterness that you obey Yorgrix? Do you relish the pain you inflict, or do you secretly pity enemies? Will your companions grow distant through fear or revulsion? Balance any doubts of your intentions with a set of goals affirming your loyalty to the group. Then again, you could cultivate their fear.

Sample Traits: Audacious, brooding, cocky, condescending, evasive, sadistic, self-loathing, self-serving, spiteful, volatile, xenophobic.

Fey Pact

The fey pact embodies the magical undercurrents flowing from the Feywild, and the impact of these undercurrents upon your mood and attitude can distance you from the banality of the mundane as your values become as turbulent as the winds.

Fey patrons are capricious creatures that are prone to fits of ecstasy and cruelty. To them you might be a momentary plaything or a disgustingly "normal" example of the mundane. Your patron might deceive you, squander your talents, and at times grow bored with you; at other times you revel with it in the magical ecstasy that flows from the world's perfect echo.



Common Patrons: Eladrin, firbolgs, fomorians, hags, treants, unicorns, or any legendary fey creature such as the Eochaid

Sample Patron: The Eochaid

The will of Corellon summoned the Eochaid, an enigmatic being of arcane energy, from the Feywild and bound it in ageless flesh.

Origin: Beneath vine-covered ruins and ancient standing stones, the Eochaid dances and prowls, daring warlocks to come before him. No one knows when the Eochaid came into the world. Some say that he is the resonating melody of Corellon's flute, given sentience when the borders between the world and Feywild were made. Others say he was always there, sleeping beneath the blissful twilight of the world's infancy—the wondrous child of nature and magic. Throughout the rise and fall of empires he has dwelt alone, deep within a mystic forest, where he remains unsympathetic to the plight of mortals. Although he can take any form he desires, he frequently appears in an elegant mixture of fey humanoid and animal shapes, his otherness embodying both beauty and danger. Those who see him come away realizing that he *is* magic given form and voice.

Goals: The Eochaid's purpose is to expand the influence of arcane magic and to find and protect relics touched by the fey gods during their sojourns in the world. To accomplish these goals, the Eochaid has made a pact with you, as someone touched by the mystic currents of the Feywild or charmed by its influence. In return for his arcane blessing, you must range across the world, cultivating the seed of the arcane and seeking artifacts, gaining more power with each treasure you protect or return to the Eochaid's standing stones. The Eochaid is not concerned with how you find these artifacts, as long as you honor the sanctity of the Feywild.

Interaction: Though dedicated to his goals, the Eochaid is prone to fits of malevolent whimsy. His tutelage is chaotic and wild, filled with dangerous lessons mixed with long nights of debauched, ritualized jubilation. You might offend his otherworldly sensibilities or fail to understand his jokes. Like a mad jester he cavorts and beguiles for his own amusement, punctuating this madness with moments of startling clarity—if you're sober enough to comprehend. In anger, he rivals the intensity of a summer tempest.

Communication: The Eochaid lurks in the glassy stare of birds or in the shadows of mossy stones; breathe deeply of the morning's mist and know that the Eochaid is watching. Perhaps he sees through your eyes.

Pact Boon: Delighted in your struggle, the Eochaid exhales a deep eldritch breath which flows through you, sweeping you along with it, and brings you a moment's perfect clarity that leaves you aching with loss when the moment ends.

Roleplaying: Your pact with the Eochaid makes you a figure of dangerous allure. Did you readily accept his pact, or were you charmed into service? Have you allied with fey creatures, or do you resent their aloofness? Do you now indulge yourself with your powers, using them in reckless games of deception? Others might see you as unpredictable, possessing a mean streak that sometimes overpowers your charming demeanor. Is this capriciousness your fey patron's influence rubbing off on you, or has the pact loosened your inhibitions? Wild mood swings

might frustrate your allies, and a wide-eyed desire for new experiences can highlight your ever-shifting interests.

Sample Traits: Aloof, amoral, amorous, cunning, impulsive, mercurial, restless, sensual, whimsical

Infernal Pact

The infernal pact puts your eternal soul into near certain damnation, but no other pact offers you such power. With it, you become an indestructible force, gaining dominion over any who dare judge you.

Infernal patrons are masters of corruption. They whisper into the world to dupe ambitious mortals into entering their fiendish bureaucracy, trapping such mortals with promises of worldly satisfaction. Most demand your soul in return for power, but others can be bought off with heart-wrenching sacrifices, the performing of terrible deeds, or offers of raw power. Infernal patrons are overwhelmingly evil, and pacts with the rare ones that aren't can be a dangerous proposition.

Common Patrons: Cambions, devils, duergar, or legendary infernal powers such as the Prisoner in Iron

Sample Patron: The Prisoner in Iron

Serving a sentence of his soul's own folly, this mortal warlock reaches out for freedom.

Origin: The soul of this warlock, who was once an unrivaled master of infernal magic, penitently suffers under chain and stockade deep within the Iron City of Dis. His captors have all but destroyed his worldly legacy, even erasing his name from history. Some believe fear drives devils to hide this legacy relentlessly; legends say that the Prisoner's power rivaled those of the archdevils. In life he was one of the Nine Hells' greatest enemies, using his patron's infernal magic for good. Yet he was a dangerous ally to mortals, arrogantly shattering religious taboos and reveling in his powers. In the end, though, he was bound to the price of his infernal patron's pact. The story says that he entered the Nine Hells of his own volition with the intent of usurping his patron's throne or freeing himself from the pact. Either way, the story ends with his soul being bound to eternal anguish beneath the iron ramparts of Dis.

Goals: Powerful beyond fiendish reckoning, the Prisoner in Iron projects his spirit into the world, hoping you can undertake the impossible task of storming the Iron City. He guides you to remnants of his mortal life, hoping they can give you knowledge to combat devils. These remains might be old allies, artifacts, and physical remains of his mortal body. Beware though, for your actions might draw the gaze of Dispater, who is ever watchful for would-be rescuers.

Interaction: The Prisoner speaks with resolute honesty. He openly teaches you powers and urges their use. Yet, this instruction carries dangerous implications because the Prisoner has been corrupted from a lifetime of infernal magic. Take heed: The Prisoner represents not only the indomitable desire for freedom, but the inevitable fate of warlocks following the infernal pact. Could his plan be to swap places with you in the end?

Communication: Relics associated with the Prisoner serve as mediums through which his soul can speak to you. Another more dire way is to offer up the life of an enemy, temporarily giving the Prisoner's spirit strength to enter the world. This sacrifice could be a one-way road to corruption.

Pact Boon: The Prisoner invigorates you with a tiny shred of his power—a sacrifice that furthers his slow annihilation. You can offer up your enemies to replenish the Prisoner's own store of power, but at what cost to your own soul?

Roleplaying: Unlike most infernal warlocks, your pact with the Prisoner gives you hellish powers without the explicit selling of your soul. Do you believe his plight, or do you not trust him because of his tainted history? Maybe he's no better than the devils imprisoning him. How can you be sure he isn't telling you exactly what you want to hear? Others judge you and question your morals, saying that no association with the Nine Hells is justified. Do you scoff at their warnings, or do you feel—like the Prisoner—that infernal magic is neither good nor evil, but a tool one can use for either end. You have chosen to follow the Prisoner's teachings, but you must be mindful of your choices and their consequences so that you do not follow his fate.

Sample Traits: Authoritarian, disgraced, farsighted, iconoclastic, manipulative, menacing, proud, ostentatious, self-loathing

Star Pact

Having been touched by keen insight or shattering madness, star pact warlocks wield unfathomable powers at great cost. With these powers, you can manifest the doom of enemies, burning them with energy called down from stars or reforming reality with knowledge gleaned from the void of fate.

Star pact patrons dwell beyond the limits of reality, existing in the darkness of space or the Far Realm. Their goals are vague and mysterious, pointing

toward a greater cataclysm that will in time reshape the universe, as it has countless times before.

Common Patrons: Foulspawn, gibbering beasts, mind flayers, star spawn, and other cosmic forces that should not be known or named.

Sample Patron: Ulban, the Messenger

After crossing paradoxes of space and time, Ulban, self-proclaimed remnant from a thousand eons hence, arrives.

Origin: Streaking across the night sky in a radiant flash, the comet Ulban has appeared throughout the centuries at times of great distress. With each passing, those sensitive to the power of the stars receive an opportunity to commune with the sentience bound within it. It reveals truths by opening one's eyes to the greater reality and limitless scope of the universe, and potentially one's pivotal place in it. Such listeners learn that Ulban is no mere comet; the Messenger exists outside space and time, and it is the last survivor of the universe's final undoing. It searches for one it believes can alter its past, ensuring the survival of the cosmos. It claims that you, more than any other individual at any time, can direct the fate of the universe, saving everything that will ever exist from the atrophy of the Star Spawn.

Goals: Ulban's appearance marks dark times ahead. It crosses the alignment of Allabar and other baleful celestial bodies when their influence is greatest, disrupting their machinations by instructing you in the use of the powers of warlock champions from its own time. Its mysterious knowledge drives you to instigate plots taking years to complete. These plots test the limits of morality by sending entire regions spiraling into chaos, uncovering secrets best left hidden, and confronting enemies without regard to

moral motivations. All this, Ulban claims, shall avert disaster in coming eons.

Interaction: Ulban's mission does not accommodate mortal frailty. Its directives are so forceful that they paralyze your mind. These episodes bombard you with unfathomable images from across time. After recovery, you have instantaneous understanding of new star magic and Ulban's will as you watch the comet disappear into the night sky.

Communication: Contacting Ulban demands intricate astrological calculations that change with phases of the night sky or hostile meddling of the other stars.

Pact Boon: Ulban has foretold the felling of your last enemy and—as also foreseen—sends you brief glimpses of the doomed future, giving you insight into your next action.

Roleplaying: The comet's revelations have left their mark on you. Can you still find meaning in familiar experiences? Do you go through life in nihilistic apathy, foretelling doom? Or do you accept Ulban's pact because denying it would invite the death of the universe? With your knowledge you could protect countless innocents or philosophize with sages about the true nature of reality. What of Ulban itself? Do you fully trust it, or do you doubt its intentions? You can only guess who or what will benefit most from the manipulation of its past, but is ignoring its ominous predictions worth the risk?

Suggested Traits: Apathetic, bizarre, nervous, pessimistic, prophetic, truth-seeking, unreadable, unsettling

Vestige Pact

With a gaze that reaches beyond time, vestige pact warlocks possess extreme poise and clarity of perspective, using their pact as a weapon by calling on mighty manifestations of the past. By allowing your body to be inhabited by these vestiges, you can draw out their tremendous potency, bolstering allies and harrying enemies.

Patrons giving knowledge to call on vestiges are diverse, but most are immortal or have access to a wide span of years and knowledge. They dwell apart from the mundane, so their ascetic pursuit of knowledge, power, or duty causes them to have a detached

manner and way of thinking. If you wish, they can open the gateway to beyond, allowing you to evoke vestiges, but this power always demands a sacrifice.

The vestige pact is one a warlock might make without the aid of a physical patron. Vestiges are archetypal entities that exist within and because of collective consciousness. It could be that you came to this knowledge intuitively without the aid of another being.

Common Patrons: Couatls, devas, liches, maruts, mummies, sphinxes, vampires, and legendary archetypes manifested as vestiges

Sample Patron: The Bleak Guide

This macabre icon of the Shadowfell represents the journey all must make in the end.

Origin: This grim vestige is inexorably linked to the Shadowfell. Carrying a lantern of ghostly radiance, the wraithlike Bleak Guide is said to watch spirits as they depart life and enter the Shadowfell. There, with unfailing devotion, it silently points them toward the Raven Queen and beyond. Its Stygian demeanor is unshakable, as is its apathy. The Bleak Guide's existence and purpose is widely debated by scholars and clerics. Some say he was a lich bound to the Raven Queen's service and is being punished for a selfish quest for immortality. Others think he is first among the Raven Queen's servants, his appearance changed after eons of service. Warlocks know better though, for none living come so close to the Bleak Guide as they do.

Goals: An orderly transition of life to death drives the Bleak Guide; he is bound to the Shadowfell like a reaper to the harvest. Yet, throughout the world are those who would subvert the natural order of death, robbing the departed of their rest and toll. These necromancers, ambitious undead, and unquiet spirits become more common with the wildness that envelops the world. The Bleak Guide makes a pact with you, charging you to be his worldly instrument to protect the sanctity of death, allowing you access to powerful vestiges brought back from beyond the veil of death.

Interaction: Making a pact with the Bleak Guide requires that you do what all beings must in time before making the pact final: die. Upon meeting the Bleak Guide, you must give up an aspect of yourself—an emotion or a precious memory—to take your soul's place. The Bleak Guide then imparts knowledge of the vestiges and shepherds your soul back to your body. Whatever part you surrendered to him is dead—lost to you perhaps forever.

Communication: The Bleak Guide's eldritch lantern is the only part of him that can manifest in the world. It appears on gloomy nights to call you to action.

Pact Boon: The Bleak Guide collects the spirit of your enemy and repays you by guiding a vestige to your side for a fleeting moment.

Roleplaying: What led you to the vestige pact? Did you purposefully suffer death to stand before the Bleak Guide, possibly to beg him to speak to a departed loved one? Or did you happen to see the Bleak Guide on your passage into the Shadowfell after unfortunate death? Is your pact with him a bargain to temporarily elude death? Do you lament the surrendered fragment of yourself, or do you remember it as more than a blank spot in your being? How has this missing aspect affected your personality? Do you view vestiges with respect, or are they mere tools you use to accomplish your goals?

Suggested Traits: Brooding, confident, distant, macabre, poised, profound, scholarly, somber, sullen

Warlock Feats

These new feats include those that utilize your warlock class features or call upon your patron for assistance.

Heroic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of any level who meets the prerequisites.

Cruel Whimsy

Prerequisite: Warlock, fey pact

Benefit: When an enemy fails a saving throw against an effect bestowed by one of your warlock powers, you can shift 1 square as a free action.

Diminishing Spirit Curse

Prerequisite: Warlock, vestige pact

Benefit: When you hit a bloodied enemy under your Warlock's Curse, it takes a –2 penalty to its next saving throw before the end of your next turn.

Offering to the Prisoner

Prerequisite: Warlock, infernal pact

Benefit: Instead of gaining temporary hit points from *dark one's blessing*, you can add 2 extra damage to the next warlock attack you make before the end of your next turn. The extra damage increases to 4 at 11th level and to 6 at 21st level.

Patron's Guidance

Prerequisite: Warlock, Shadow Walk class feature

Benefit: When you take this feat, choose two skills. While you have concealment from Shadow Walk, you gain a +2 bonus to skill checks with these skills.

Spirit Poison

Prerequisite: Warlock, dark pact

Benefit: When you deal necrotic or poison damage with a warlock power, you deal necrotic and poison damage instead.

Ulban's Flare

Prerequisite: Warlock, star pact

Benefit: When you hit a creature with *dire radiance* and you have concealment or total concealment from that target, the target takes 2 extra damage and a –2 penalty to attack rolls until the end of your next turn. The extra damage increases to 4 at 11th level and to 6 at 21st level.

Yorgrix's Brutality

Prerequisite: Warlock, dark pact

Benefit: When you damage a creature with a warlock attack power while that creature is taking ongoing damage, the creature takes 2 extra poison damage. The extra damage increases to 4 at 11th level and to 6 at 21st level.

Paragon Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of 11th level or higher who meets the prerequisites.

Beseech Patron

Prerequisite: 11th level, warlock, Warlock's Curse

Benefit: When you spend an action point to take an extra action and use an arcane power, you gain the benefit of your pact boon as if an enemy under your Warlock's Curse had dropped to 0 hit points or fewer.

Bleak Guide's Return

Prerequisite: 11th level, warlock, vestige pact

Benefit: Whenever you score a critical hit against a target with your *eyes of the vestige* power, the next warlock encounter attack you use before the end of your next turn is not expended if you miss every target.

Eochaid's Lure

Prerequisite: 11th level, warlock, fey pact

Benefit: When you leave a square because of the Misty Step pact boon, you can slide each enemy adjacent to that square 1 square.

Message of Doom Spurned

Prerequisite: 11th level, warlock, star pact

Benefit: When you have a bonus from the Fate of the Void pact boon, you can apply it to all your defenses as an immediate interrupt when an enemy hits you. When you do, it lasts until the triggering attack is resolved, and then the bonus is spent.

Prisoner's Resolve

Prerequisite: 11th level, warlock, infernal pact

Benefit: If you fail a saving throw, you can take 10 damage to make another saving throw against the same effect. You can do this only once per effect per round. This damage cannot be reduced in any way.

Warlock Backgrounds

These new backgrounds can explain the circumstances that prompted you to make your pact.

Arcane Pariah

You were a student to the finest wizard mentor. Yet, you grew bored with the old mage's sermonizing. Impatiently, you sought shortcuts to power by making your pact. Breaking this arcane taboo, you were banished by your teacher. Do you revel in the powers and scoff at the dangers of your pact? Have you realized the mistake you've made and sought to reconcile with your old mentor?

Associated Skills: Diplomacy, Streetwise

Buried Alive (Dark)

You were trapped in a cave—the victim of an unfortunate accident or malice. Pinned beneath rubble, you wasted away in the darkness for what seemed like days. A mysterious entity offered you salvation for a price. What promises did you make to the obscene forms in the shadows to secure your freedom?

Associated Skills: Dungeoneering, Endurance

Dark Contract (Infernal)

All deals are final, and whether entered into knowingly or tricked by fiendish bureaucracy, your immortal soul is held in custody by your infernal patron. What drove you to seal such a pact? Do you offer your patron the souls of others hoping it will release yours? Do you fear the torment that will follow in your death, or do you recklessly live for the present?

Associated Skills: Intimidate, Religion

Desperate Measures

Fate was against you, and you were left with no choice but to make your pact. Did you do so to save yourself or a loved one? Did the pact give you the power to combat a greater evil? What were the results of your desperate deal, and are you still bound to the pact?

Associated Skills: Endurance, Heal

Glamoured (Fey)

Ensorcelled by a fickle patron, you were drawn into your pact against your will or better judgment. How do you regard the fey and your patron? Do you strive to use your warlock powers to avenge yourself from the patron's callous manipulation? Do you keep the source of your power secret, or publicly revel in its newfound boons?

Associated Skills: Nature, Stealth

Naïve Arrogance

You know the consequences, but you are strong enough to withstand the patron's influence without corruption—or at least you think you are. For you the pact is a calculated risk, and you trust to your willpower or decency to justify associating with a patron. Are you a bored debutante at play with fell magic? Perhaps you are a student of the clergy, peering into heretical lore. Are you so focused on your goals that you can rub elbows with dire entities without their evil corrupting you?

Associated Skills: Arcana, Bluff

Remnant Legacy (Vestige)

You claim ancestry or influence from a vestige. Are you fixated by tasks left undone by vestiges? You might feel a connection to places or events your vestige touched in life. Do you strive to live up to their example or to atone for terrible acts? Perhaps you experience moments of déjà vu and question whether it is your own life you're living and not that of the vestiges.

Associated Skills: Arcana, History

Seeking Penitence

Long is the list of your transgressions, but your patron represents a chance to wash away the stains of a sordid history. What reviled deeds weigh heavily upon your soul? What made you abandon your path of deviance and seek atonement—if such a thing exists for your actions? Do you embrace the example of your patron, or struggle to live up to its values?

Associated Skills: Endurance, History

Stargazer (Star)

You've always thought best under the light of the stars. Do you value their placid beauty? Do the constellations hold a deeper meaning for you? How has this detachment influenced your upbringing? Were you considered profound or mad due to your fascination with stars? Maybe you've felt something staring back.

Associated Skills: Insight, Perception

The Warrior Forge Artificer

By Rodney Thompson
Illustrations by Eric Belisle

The Eberron® Player's Guide *features the battlesmith artificer and the tinkering artificer. This article adds the warrior forge artificer, who transforms his allies into veritable weapons for his use and infuses their armor with powerful spells to keep them functioning as his proxy on the battlefield.*

Warrior Forge Artificer

The warrior forge artificer fights from a distance, using implement and ranged weapon attacks to deliver punishment away from the front lines. The warrior forge artificer turns his allies into his weapons, while at the same time providing them with defensive bonuses so that they can stand up to the increased punishment that comes with having one less character in melee combat. Assign your highest ability score to Intelligence, and your second highest to Wisdom. The build offers a path of powers for implement users, as well as one for weapon users, but you can mix and match if you so choose.

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Suggested Healing Infusion: *shielding elixir*
Suggested Feat: Forceful Defense*
Suggested Skills: Dungeoneering, Heal, Perception
Suggested At-Will Powers: *ethereal chill*, *thundering armor**
Suggested Encounter Power: *drain speed*
Suggested Daily Power: *flameburst armor*
**Presented in the* Eberron Player's Guide.

New Healing Infusion

When you create an artificer, you can choose to take the *shielding elixir* power in place of the resistive formula power (*Eberron Player's Guide*, page 45). If you do so, the *shielding elixir* healing infusion functions exactly as other healing infusions do, with regards to their use and replenishment. If you choose the *shielding elixir* infusion, you cannot create the *resistive formula* healing infusion at all.

Healing Infusion: Shielding Elixir — Artificer Feature

You carefully prepare a formula that inoculates your target's body against damage of a certain type.

Encounter (Special) ✦ Arcane
Minor Action **Close** burst 5 (10 at 11th level, 15 at 21st level)
Target: You or one ally in burst
Effect: The target gains resist 5 to one of the following damage types until the end of the encounter: cold, fire, force, lightning, necrotic, poison, radiant, or thunder. The target can end the bonus as a free action to become immune to that damage type until the end of his or her next turn.
Level 11: Resist 10.
Level 21: Resist 15.
Special: You can use two Healing Infusion powers per encounter, but only one per round. At 16th level, you can use three Healing Infusion powers per encounter, but only one per round.

Level 1 At-Will Spells

Ethereal Chill — Artificer Attack 1

You align your spell with those you wove over your ally's armor, causing them to radiate an unnatural cold.

At-Will ✦ Arcane, Cold, Implement
Standard Action **Area** burst 1 centered on an ally within 5 squares
Target: One enemy in burst
Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex
Hit: 1d8 + Intelligence modifier cold damage. Until the end of your next turn, any enemy that hits the ally takes cold damage equal to your Wisdom modifier.
Level 21: 2d8 + Intelligence modifier cold damage.

Level 1 Encounter Spells

Drain Speed — Artificer Attack 1

You bind the quickness of your enemy to the enchantments you placed on your ally, transferring speed from one to the other.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Implement, Necrotic
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 1d10 + Intelligence modifier necrotic damage, and the target is slowed until the end of your next turn. Choose one ally within 5 squares of the target; that ally gains a +2 bonus to speed until the end of your next turn and also gains 5 temporary hit points.

Halo of Thorns — Artificer Attack 1

You enchant your ammunition with poisoning magic, then transfer that enchantment onto one of your allies close to the target.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Poison, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Intelligence modifier poison damage, and choose one ally within 5 squares of the target. Until the end of your next turn, any creature that hits that ally with a melee attack takes poison damage equal to your Wisdom modifier.

Level 1 Daily Spells

Flameburst Armor — Artificer Attack 1

You inscribe a fiery rune upon your ally's armor or garments, then turn a fire spirit loose on the field of battle as you flare the rune periodically.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Fire, Implement
Minor Action **Melee** touch
Primary Target: You or one ally
Effect: You infuse the target's armor with an elemental fire spirit. Until the end of the encounter, the target gains resist 5 fire. In addition, you can use the following attack once per round until the end of the encounter if the primary target is within 5 squares of you.
Standard Action **Close** burst 1 centered on the ally you targeted with *flameburst armor*
Special: You can use this power only once per turn.
Secondary Target: Each enemy in burst
Effect: The secondary target takes fire damage equal to 5 + your implement's enhancement bonus and is marked by the primary target until the end of your next turn.

War Proxy — Artificer Attack 1

You forge an arcane bond between your weapon and your ally, causing your attacks to spring forth from small portals that appear next to your ally.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Weapon
Standard Action **Close** burst 3, centered on an ally within 5 squares
Target: One creature in burst
Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Intelligence modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, if the ally is within 10 squares of you and you have line of effect to the ally, you can use that ally as the origin square for your ranged weapon attacks.

Level 2 Utility Spells

Arcane Anchor — Artificer Utility 2

You trigger latent enchantments placed on yourself or an ally to resist being pushed around the area.

Encounter ✦ Arcane
Immediate Interrupt **Ranged** 10
Trigger: You or an ally are affected by a push, pull, or slide effect
Target: The triggering creature
Effect: The forced movement is negated.

Level 3 Encounter Spells

Shocking Feedback — Artificer Attack 3

You quickly fire an enchanted shot at an attacking enemy, then cause the magic from the enchantment to leap onto your ally as a protective ward.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Lightning, Weapon
Immediate Interrupt **Ranged** weapon
Trigger: An enemy hits and deals damage to one of your allies with an attack
Target: The triggering enemy
Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Intelligence modifier lightning damage, and the ally hit gains resist 5 all until the end of your next turn.

Hypnotic Distraction — Artificer Attack 3

The runes carved on your armor and implement flow hypnotically, drawing the attention of one of your enemies.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Implement, Psychic
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence vs. Will
Hit: 2d10 + Intelligence modifier psychic damage, and the target takes a penalty to attack rolls equal to your Wisdom modifier until the end of your next turn.

Level 5 Daily Spells

Warweaver's Tether — Artificer Attack 5

You trigger the enchantments on your ally's armor, opening up a connection between you and that ally that bends space with arcane power.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Force, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Special: Choose one ally within 5 squares of you. That ally's square is the point of origin for this attack.
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Intelligence modifier force damage, and you push the target a number of squares equal to 1 + your Wisdom modifier.
Miss: Half damage, and you push the target 2 squares.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, you can use the following power once per round.
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You teleport into an unoccupied square adjacent to the ally you chose for *warweaver's tether*, provided that the ally is within 10 squares of you.

Thunderclap Armor — Artificer Attack 5

You conjure a minor thunder elemental, binding it to your ally's armor while retaining control of its arcane power.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Implement, Thunder
Minor Action **Melee** touch
Primary Target: You or one ally
Effect: You infuse the target's armor with an elemental thunder spirit. Until the end of the encounter, the target gains resist 5 thunder, and any enemy that ends its turn adjacent to the target takes 5 thunder damage. In addition, you can use the following attack once per round until the end of the encounter if the primary target is within 5 squares of you.
Standard Action **Close** burst 2 centered on the primary target
Secondary Target: One creature in burst
Secondary Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 1d10 + Intelligence modifier thunder damage, and you push the secondary target 2 squares from the primary target.

Level 6 Utility Spells

Energy Conversion — Artificer Utility 6

Your spell absorbs the energy of your enemy's attacks, turning it into a protective ward for your ally.

Encounter ✦ Arcane
Immediate Interrupt **Ranged** 10
Trigger: An ally takes damage from an attack
Target: The triggering ally
Effect: The target gains resist all equal to 5 + your Wisdom modifier against the triggering attack. After the attack is resolved, the ally gains temporary hit points equal 5 + your Wisdom modifier.

Level 7 Encounter Spells

Debilitating Intercession — Artificer Attack 7

You fire a snap shot at an attacking enemy in retribution for an attack, then transfer the energy from your attack to create a weakening ward around your ally.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Necrotic, Weapon
Immediate Reaction **Ranged** weapon
Trigger: An enemy hits and deals damage to one of your allies with an attack
Target: The triggering enemy
Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Intelligence modifier necrotic damage, and until the end of your next turn any enemy takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls while adjacent to the ally.

Sphere of Reality — Artificer Attack 7

You hurl a glass orb that warps reality when it cracks open, blasting your enemy and opening a rift through which you can attack.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Implement, Thunder
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence vs. Will
Hit: 2d10 + Intelligence modifier thunder damage, and choose a square adjacent to the target. Until the end of your next turn, you can treat that square as the point of origin of your attacks.

Level 9 Daily Spells

Healer's Momentum — Artificer Attack 9

You draw upon the force of your enemy's attacks, transforming them into a curative infusion on the fly.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Healing, Weapon
Immediate Reaction **Ranged** weapon
Trigger: An enemy deals damage with an attack to one of your allies within 5 squares of you
Target: The triggering enemy
Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Intelligence modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: The ally hit by the triggering attack roll can spend a healing surge. Two other allies within 5 squares of the target gain temporary hit points equal to their healing surge value.

Static Shell — Artificer Attack 9

You create an enchantment of arcane static that you lay of your ally's armor.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Lightning, Implement
Minor Action **Melee** touch
Primary Target: You or one ally
Effect: You infuse the target's armor with a static charge. Until the end of the encounter, the target gains resist 5 lightning. In addition, you can use the following attack once per round until the end of the encounter if the primary target is within 5 squares of you.
Standard Action **Close** burst 2 centered on the primary target
Secondary Target: Each enemy in burst
Secondary Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude
Hit: 1d10 + Intelligence modifier lightning damage, and you pull the secondary target 1 square to a space adjacent to the primary target.

Level 10 Utility Spells

Recuperative Enchantment — Artificer Utility 10

You trigger enchantments placed on your ally's armor that temporarily infuses them with healing energy.

Encounter ✦ Arcane
Free Action **Close** burst 10
Trigger: An ally in range spends a healing surge
Target: The triggering ally
Effect: The target heals additional hit points equal to his or her healing surge value.

Level 13 Encounter Spells

Bond of Transference — Artificer Attack 13

You create an arcane connection between an enemy and your ally, drawing effects from your ally to your enemy.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Force, Implement
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2d8 + Intelligence modifier force damage, and choose one ally within 5 squares of the target. If that ally has any effects on him or her that a save can end, end one such effect on that ally and the target gains that same effect until the end of your next turn.

Wind of Swirling Flames — Artificer Attack 13

A burning wind flows behind your arrow as it streaks away from you, then swirls around your target, drawing your allies closer.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Fire, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Intelligence modifier fire damage, and choose one ally within 5 squares of the target. Until the end of your next turn, that ally can shift 1 square as a minor action, as long as that shift does not take the ally farther away from the target.

Level 15 Daily Spells

Ice Archon's Armor — Artificer Attack 15

You bind a fragment of an ice archon's power to your ally's armor, transforming it into similar armor.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Cold, Implement
Minor Action **Melee** touch
Primary Target: You or one ally
Effect: You infuse the target's armor with an elemental cold spirit. Until the end of the encounter, the ally gains resist 10 cold, and any enemy that starts its turn adjacent to the target gains vulnerable 5 cold damage until the start of its next turn. In addition, you can use the following attack once per round until the end of the encounter if the primary target is within 5 squares of you.
Standard Action **Close** burst 3 centered on the primary target
Secondary Target: One creature in burst
Secondary Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 2d8 + Intelligence modifier cold damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of your next turn.

Spellmaster's Pawn — Artificer Attack 15

You bond your own weapon to the enchantments you placed on your allies, causing your attacks to emanate from them.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Force, Weapon
Standard Action **Close** burst 3 centered on an ally within 10 squares
Requirement: You must be wielding a ranged weapon.
Target: One creature in burst
Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 4[W] + Intelligence modifier force damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, you can choose to use the ally you chose for this power as the point of origin for all your arcane ranged attack powers.

Level 16 Utility Spells

Dimensional Mooring — Artificer Utility 16

You use the enchantments on your ally's armor to moor him or her to your current plane, making him or her a part of the fabric of reality.

Encounter ✦ Arcane
Minor Action **Ranged** 10
Target: You or one ally in range
Effect: The target cannot be pushed, pulled, slid, knocked prone, or teleported against its will until the end of your next turn.

Level 17 Encounter Spells

Addling Pattern — Artificer Attack 17

You weave an enchantment over your allies' armor that confuses foes, causing them to attack their friends.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Charm, Implement, Psychic
Standard Action **Close** blast 5
Target: One or two enemies in blast
Attack: Intelligence vs. Will
Hit: 2d8 + Intelligence modifier psychic damage, and until the end of your next turn if the target attacks you or an ally adjacent to you, the target must also make a basic attack against a creature of your choice.

Arsenal Transference — Artificer Attack 17

You lend your arcane knowledge to an ally, briefly letting him or her make use of your enchantments.

Encounter ✦ Arcane
Immediate Reaction **Ranged** 10
Trigger: An ally within 10 squares of you is hit and damaged by an attack
Effect: You can use an at-will artificer attack power against the target, using the ally's space as the origin for the attack. This attack deals extra damage equal to your Wisdom modifier.

Level 19 Daily Spells

Planestorm Anchor — Artificer Attack 19

You weave enchantments used by powerful planeswalkers over your ally, transforming them into a focal point for teleportation.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Lightning, Thunder, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Intelligence modifier lightning and thunder damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).
Miss: Half damage, and the target is dazed until the end of your next turn.
Effect: Choose an ally within 5 squares of the target. Until the end of the encounter, when the ally is within 10 squares of you, you can use the following attack.
Standard Action **Personal**
Effect: You teleport into an unoccupied space adjacent to the chosen ally and make the following secondary attack.
Secondary Target: Each adjacent enemy
Secondary Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d8 + Intelligence modifier lightning and thunder damage.

Radiant Forcefield — Artificer Attack 19

You bestow an enchantment of radiant energy upon the armor of your ally, warding them against oncoming attackers.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Implement, Radiant
Minor Action **Melee** touch
Primary Target: You or one ally
Effect: You infuse the target's armor with radiant energy. Until the end of the encounter, the target gains resist 10 radiant. In addition, you can use the following attack once per round until the end of the encounter if the primary target is within 5 squares of you.
Standard Action **Close** burst 2 centered on the primary target
Secondary Target: Each enemy in burst
Effect: The target takes radiant damage equal to 10 + your implement's enhancement bonus and grants combat advantage until the end of your next turn.

Level 22 Utility Spells

Opportunistic Enchantment — Artificer Utility 22

You quickly trigger the enchantments on your ally's weapons, altering their attack.

Encounter ✦ Arcane
Opportunity Action **Ranged** 10
Trigger: A creature provokes an opportunity attack from one of your allies within range
Target: The ally making the opportunity attack
Effect: The target can roll twice for the attack roll, keeping either result, and you choose one damage type: cold, fire, force, lightning, or thunder. If the ally's opportunity attack hits, the attack deals damage of that type, instead of any damage type it normally deals.

Level 23 Encounter Spells

Mental Beacon — Artificer Attack 23

You transform something your enemy is carrying or wearing into a psychic beacon that calls out for your allies' attacks.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Implement, Psychic
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence vs. Will
Hit: 3d8 + Intelligence modifier damage, and until the end of your next turn each time one of your allies makes a ranged attack against the target, the ally can roll twice and keep either result.

Rejuvenating Intercession — Artificer Attack 23

You flare the enchantments on your ally, damaging their attacker and transferring rejuvenating energy to the ally.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Healing, Weapon
Immediate Reaction **Ranged** weapon
Trigger: An enemy hits and deals damage to one of your allies with an attack
Target: The triggering enemy
Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Intelligence modifier damage, and the ally hit by the triggering attack roll can spend a healing surge, healing an additional number of hit points equal to 5 + your Wisdom modifier.

Level 25 Daily Spells

Armor of Storms — Artificer Attack 25

You wreathe your ally in elemental lightning, transforming his or her armor into a battery of arcane energy.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Implement, Lightning
Minor Action **Melee** touch
Primary Target: You or one ally
Effect: You infuse the target's armor with an elemental lightning spirit. Until the end of the encounter, the target gains resist 15 lightning. In addition, you can use the following attack once per round until the end of the encounter if the primary target is within 5 squares of you.
Standard Action **Close** burst 4 centered on the primary target
Secondary Target: One creature in burst
Secondary Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 1d10 + Intelligence modifier lightning damage, and the target is dazed until the end of your next turn. Each enemy adjacent to the secondary target takes lightning damage equal to 5 + your implement's enhancement bonus.

Brittle Frost — Artificer Attack 25

You freeze your enemy with a chilling cold, making it hard for it to attack effectively while transferring its lost potential to your allies.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Cold, Implement
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence vs. Will
Hit: 4d8 + Intelligence modifier cold damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: The target is weakened (save ends). As long as the target is weakened by this effect, all your allies within 5 squares of the target gain a +5 power bonus to damage rolls.

Level 27 Encounter Spells

Retribution Magnet — Artificer Attack 27

You weave enchantments of revenge and retribution on your weapon, firing off a quick shot to punish those that would hurt your allies.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Force, Weapon
Immediate Reaction **Ranged** weapon
Trigger: An enemy hits and deals damage to one of your allies with an attack
Target: The triggering enemy
Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Intelligence modifier force damage, and the ally targeted by the triggering attack gains a +4 power bonus to attack rolls against the target until the end of his or her next turn.

Vitality Siphon — Artificer Attack 27

You drain the life energy from your enemy, infusing your allies with their lost health.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Implement, Necrotic
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude
Hit: 3d8 + Intelligence necrotic modifier damage. Until the end of your next turn, each time the target takes damage, chose an ally within 5 squares of the target. That ally gains temporary hit points equal to 10 + your Wisdom modifier.

Level 29 Daily Spells

Auramorphic Armor — Artificer Attack 29

You transform your ally's armor into a shifting field of arcane energy that protects your ally from a variety of attacks.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Implement
Minor Action **Melee** touch
Target: You or one ally
Effect: You infuse the target's armor with dynamic, variable energy. Until the end of the encounter, the target gains resist 20 to any one damage type of your choice. In addition, you can use the following attack once per round until the end of the encounter if the primary target is within 5 squares of you.
Standard Action **Close** burst 2 centered on the primary target
Secondary Target: Each enemy in burst
Secondary Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex
Effect: The target takes 1d10 + Intelligence modifier damage of the type you selected when you cast *auramorphic armor*, and until the end of your next turn the target cannot attack the primary target.

Tactical Detonation — Artificer Attack 29

You fire a precision shot carrying an explosive enchantment, which hurls enemies directly into the path of your attacking allies.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Fire, Force, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Primary Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 4[W] + Intelligence modifier fire and force damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Make a secondary attack.
Secondary Target: Each enemy adjacent to the primary target.
Secondary Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2d10 + Intelligence modifier fire and force damage, and slide the target 4 squares. If the target ends its movement adjacent to one of your allies, that ally can make a melee basic attack against the target as a free action. Each target can be attacked by only one of your allies as a result of this power.

FEATS

You can augment your selection of available feats with the following artificer-based ones.

Heroic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of any level who meets the prerequisites.

Crossbow Caster

Prerequisite: Artificer

Benefit: You can use a crossbow as an implement for your artificer powers and artificer paragon path powers.

Improved Augment Energy

Prerequisite: Artificer, Arcane Empowerment class feature

Benefit: The Augment Energy option of your Arcane Empowerment class feature grants a +4 bonus to the attack roll instead of +2.

Improved Shielding Elixir

Prerequisite: Artificer, *shielding elixir* power

Benefit: Increase the resistance provided by your *shielding elixir* power by 2.

Paragon Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of 11th level or higher who meets the prerequisites.

Dungeon Enchanter

Prerequisite: 11th level, artificer, Ritual Caster

Benefit: You can use the Enchant Magic Item and Transfer Enchantment rituals with a casting time of 1 minute.

Rapid Infusion

Prerequisite: 11th level, artificer, at least one Healing Infusion power

Benefit: You can use your Healing Infusion powers as free actions on your turn instead of as a minor action.

Retribution Seeker

Prerequisite: 11th level, artificer

Benefit: You gain a +2 feat bonus to damage rolls with arcane attack powers against enemies adjacent to at least one of your allies.

Epic Tier Feat

The feat in this section is available to a character of 21st level or higher who meets the prerequisites.

Defensive Enchanting

Prerequisite: 21st level, artificer

Benefit: Your ranged arcane attack powers do not provoke opportunity attacks.

Paragon Path: Arcane Armorer

"The wards I've placed on your armor should provide you with all the protection you need."

Prerequisite: Artificer, *shielding elixir* healing infusion

Arcane armorers are skilled artificers who have focused their knowledge on enhancing the defensive capabilities of their allies. Many arcane armorers combine their knowledge of armorsmithing with their skill with the arcane arts, augmenting their allies' defenses in a way that others cannot.

Arcane armorers are especially talented at weaving enchantments over their allies' armor that not only enhances the armor but also turns the ally into a walking weapon. Arcane armorers can use the energy they imbue into an ally's armor as a method of delivering powerful spell charges at their enemies. Similarly, arcane armorers use their allies' armor as anchors, connecting enemies to their allies, draining energy from one to boost the other.

As an arcane armorer, you focus your efforts on turning your allies into your magic weapons out on the battlefield. You want your allies to move up close to the enemies you face, protecting them from afar while using them to deliver your own attacks. When your allies are in trouble, you shield them from further danger, or pull them back from the front lines.

Arcane Armorer Path Features

Protective Spell Shield (11th level): Whenever you use a Healing Infusion power on an ally, that ally cannot grant combat advantage until the end of your next turn.

Arcane Armorer's Action (11th level): Whenever you spend an action point to make an extra attack, choose one ally within 5 squares of one target of your attack. Until the end of your next turn, that ally gains resist 10 to your choice of one of cold, fire, force, lightning, necrotic, poison, radiant, or thunder damage.

Practiced Armorer (16th level): You add your Wisdom modifier to any resist value that you give to an ally.

Arcane Armorer Spells

Defense Siphon — **Arcane Armorer Attack 11**

You weave a spell that saps the strength and defenses of your enemy, transferring the power of those defenses to a nearby ally.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Necrotic, Implement
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence vs. Will
Hit: 3d8 + Intelligence modifier necrotic damage, and choose one ally within 5 squares of the target. Until the end of your next turn, the target takes a -4 penalty to your choice of Fortitude, Reflex, or Will defense, and the ally you chose gains a +4 power bonus to the same defense.

Protective Recall Arcane Armorer Attack 12

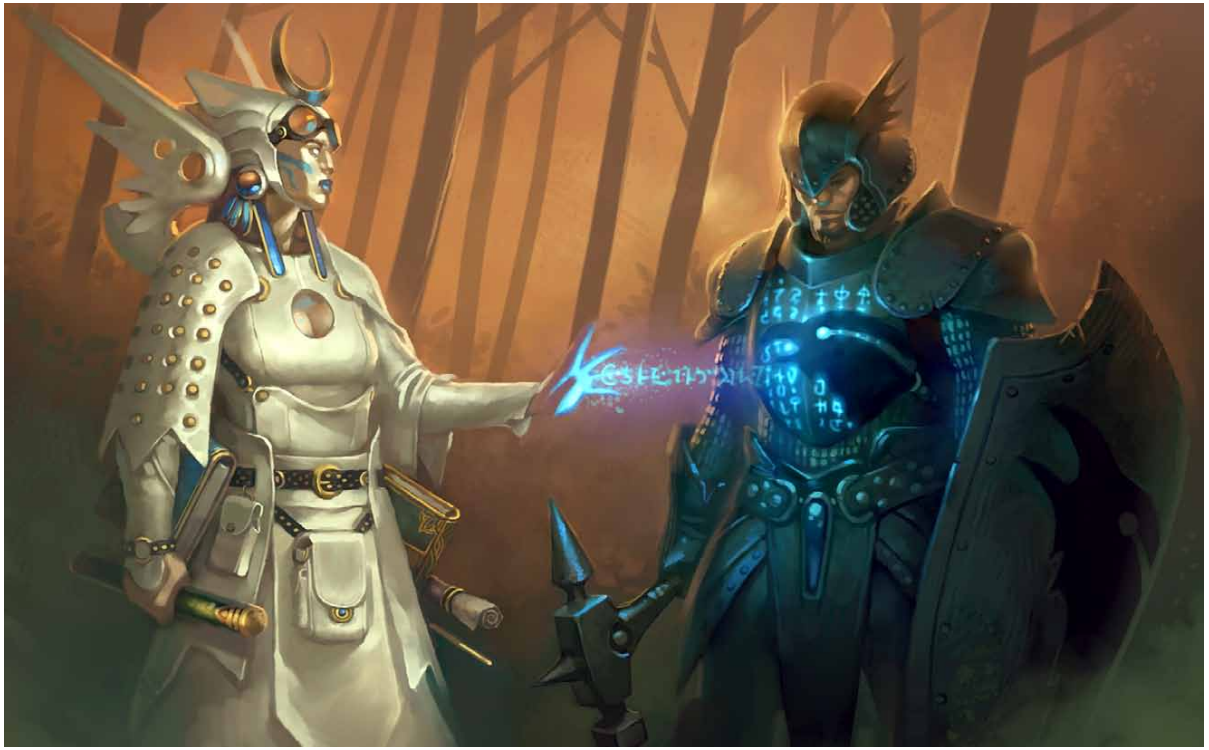
With a flash, your ally appears by your side, shielded by arcane wards.

Encounter ✦ Arcane
Immediate Reaction **Ranged** 10
Trigger: An ally is hit and damaged by an attack
Target: The triggering ally
Effect: You teleport the target into any unoccupied space adjacent to you. The target gains resist 20 to all damage until the end of his or her next turn.

Armor of Force Arcane Armorer Attack 20

You lay an enchantment over the armor worn by an ally, which causes the air to ripple with waves of raw force.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Force, Implement
Minor Action **Melee** touch
Primary Target: One ally
Effect: You infuse the primary target's armor with the power of arcane force. Until the end of the encounter, the ally gains resist 5 all. In addition, you can use the following attack once per round until the end of the encounter if the primary target is within 5 squares of you.
Standard Action **Close** burst 1 centered on the primary target
Secondary Target: Each enemy in burst
Secondary Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2d10 + Intelligence modifier force damage, and you push the secondary target away from the primary target a number of squares equal to 1 + your Wisdom modifier.



Paragon Path: Spell Commander

"Cast your spells where I say, when I say, and how I say and we'll all live to tell about today's battle."

Prerequisite: Artificer

Spell commanders are artificers who transform their allies into walking weapons of arcane destruction. Typically found as a part of more militaristic arcane institutions, spell commanders learn magic that help them increase their allies' spell power. Additionally, most spell commanders work as a part of a small squad, and many of the spells they wield are focused around small squad tactics, including rapidly moving across the battlefield.

Most spell commanders receive standard military training, including the foundation of small arms use (particularly bows and crossbows). Spell commanders combine conventional military education with their arcane knowledge to create a more hybridized approach to warfare.

As a spell commander, you know how to combine traditional combat techniques and weapon use with the power of arcane magic. Your focus is on transforming your allies into more accurate, more powerful, and more mobile forces, effectively taking on the role of a squad leader who uses spells to facilitate this transformation.

Spell Commander Path Features

Arcane Weaponmaster (11th level): You can use a bow or crossbow as an implement for ranged artificer attack powers. When you do so, increase the range of those powers by 5.

Spell Commander's Action (11th level): Whenever you spend an action point to make an attack, one ally within 10 squares of the target can use a basic attack or a 1st-level at-will arcane attack power as a free action. The ally must include at least one target of your attack as a target.

Unleash Spell Power (16th level): Whenever an adjacent ally would make a basic attack, that ally can instead use any 1st-level arcane at-will attack power they know. The ally must used ranged powers in the place of ranged basic attacks, and melee powers in the place of melee basic attacks.

Spell Commander Spells

Spell Tracer — Spell Commander Attack 11

Your shot becomes a magnet for arcane energy, drawing your allies' spells toward your enemy with great accuracy.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Force, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Intelligence modifier force damage, and one ally within 5 squares of the target can make a basic attack against the target. If that ally uses an arcane power as their basic attack, that ally gains a +2 power bonus to the attack roll.

Alter Spell Power — Spell Commander Utility 12

You quickly weave an enchantment over an ally's weapon or implement, transforming an ally's next attack.

Encounter ✦ Arcane
Free Action **Melee** touch
Trigger: An ally adjacent to you makes an attack
Target: The triggering ally's implement or weapon
Effect: Choose one of the following damage types: cold, fire, force, lightning, or thunder. The triggering attack's damage is changed to that type of damage, and the attack deals extra damage equal to your Intelligence modifier.

Living Gate — Spell Commander Attack 20

You alter the enchantments you have placed on your ally, transforming him or her into a living nexus through which others can travel.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Primary Target: One ally within 5 squares of you
Effect: You make the following attack, using the primary target's space as the origin square of the attack.
Secondary Target: One creature
Secondary Attack: Intelligence vs. AC
Hit: 4[W] + Intelligence modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, you can use the following at-will power.
Move Action **Close** burst 10
Tertiary Target: You or one ally in burst
Effect: If the tertiary target is adjacent to the primary target, the tertiary target teleports 6 squares. Otherwise, the tertiary target teleports 10 squares into an unoccupied space adjacent to the primary target.

About the Author

Rodney Thompson is a game designer at Wizards of the Coast. His previous design credits include the *Star Wars*® *Roleplaying Game Saga Edition*, the *Clone Wars Campaign Guide*™ supplement, and the *Scum and Villainy*™ supplement.

Class Acts:
Wizard Spells of the Feywild

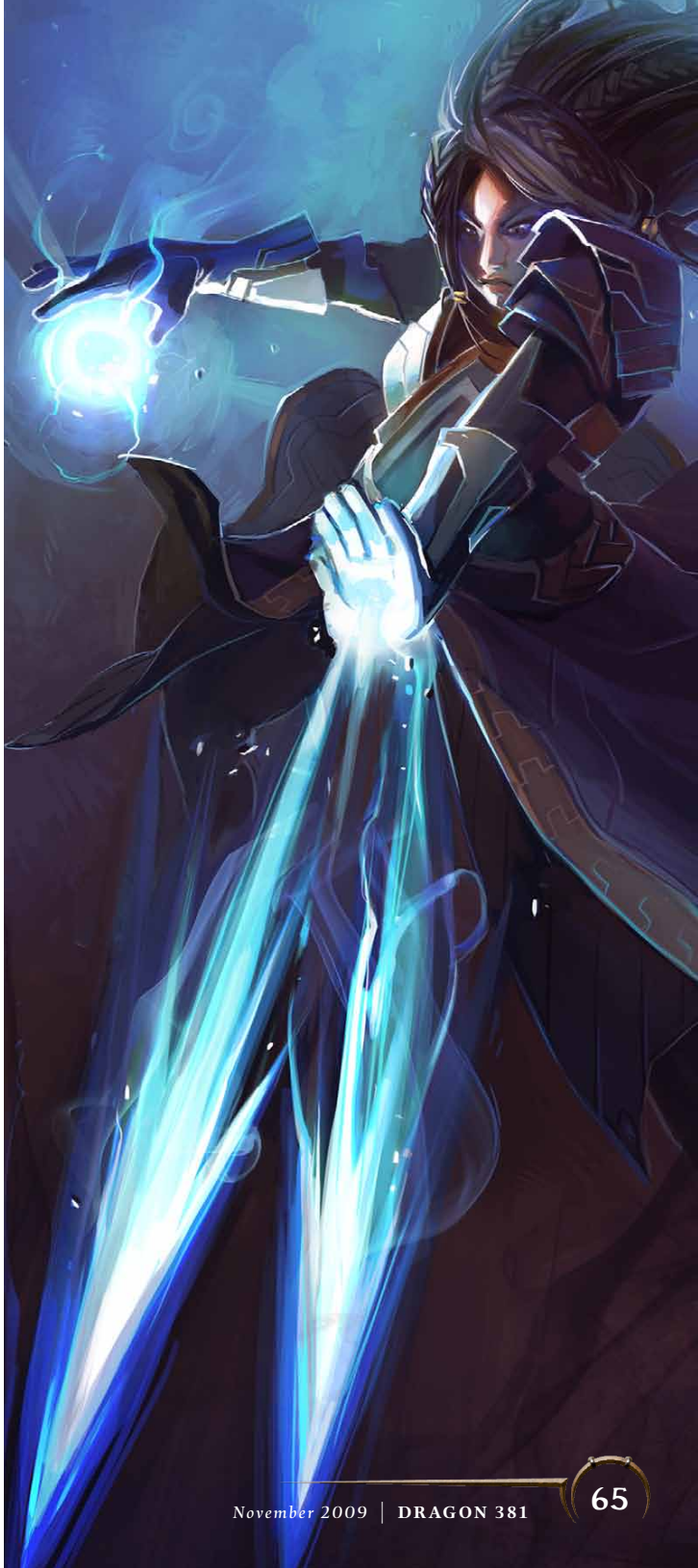
By Mike Mearls
Illustrations by Sarah Stone

The wizards of the Feywild, chief among them eladrin and gnomes, are potent adepts of the arcane arts. Such magi consider themselves more sophisticated, scholarly, and skilled than their counterparts in the world. Their attitude is driven in part by their approach to battle magic. To a spellcaster of the Feywild, a spell must either express a wizard's superiority to other creatures or demonstrate a sleek elegance that puts to shame even a skilled warrior's talents.

Common spells of the Feywild are detailed here. They follow two general themes. Some spells overcome an enemy with a deadly charm, clouding its mind and turning it from a deadly enemy into a useful tool. Other spells express the fey wizards' disdain for other approaches to battle. They conjure bolts of inescapable energy or leave an enemy looking like a fool as it swats at a foe that exists only in its mind. To casters schooled in the Feywild, winning isn't everything. Humiliating a dimwitted foe is a victory in itself.

Automagic Damage

This article introduces some powers that automatically deal damage to one or more enemies. Keep in mind that because the damage is in the "Effect" line, the powers don't hit, and therefore can't benefit from effects that trigger off of a hit. Also, since the damage is a flat number, it isn't considered a damage roll, and therefore it doesn't benefit from effects that increase the result of a damage roll (but can still benefit from extra damage that doesn't require a roll).



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Level 1 At-Will Spells

Winged Horde — Wizard Attack 1

A horde of flesh-devouring sprites appear in your foes' minds. They shriek in fear and swat at this menace, leaving them unable to react to your allies' maneuvers.

At-Will ✦ Arcane, Implement, Psychic
Standard Action **Area** burst 1 within 10
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Intelligence vs. Will
Hit: 1d6 + Intelligence modifier psychic damage, and the target cannot take opportunity actions until the end of your next turn.
Level 21: 2d6 + Intelligence modifier psychic damage.

Level 1 Encounter Spells

Charm of Misplaced Wrath — Wizard Attack 1

You bend your foe's mind, filling it with wrath as you twist and turn its senses.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Charm, Implement
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence vs. Will
Hit: The target is dazed until the end of your next turn. You slide the target 3 squares. The target then attacks a creature of your choice with a basic attack. It gains a bonus to its attack roll and damage roll equal to your implement's enhancement bonus.

Level 2 Utility Spells

Glib Tongue — Wizard Utility 2

You weave magic into your words, defusing a dangerous situation through the fine art of diplomacy.

Encounter ✦ Arcane
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: You gain a +5 power bonus to Diplomacy checks and a +2 power bonus to charm attack rolls until the end of your next turn.

Memory to Mist — Wizard Utility 2

Your magic settles into a creature's mind, causing it to forget what it just witnessed.

Daily ✦ Arcane
Minor Action **Ranged** 2
Target: One creature that is not involved in combat and that is lower level than you
Effect: The creature forgets everything that happened in the past 10 minutes and for the next 1 minute.

Spectral Image — Wizard Utility 2

With a few mystical passes, you sketch the outline of an object or creature. The sketch takes on a semblance of reality.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Illusion
Minor Action **Ranged** 10
Effect: The illusion of a Medium or smaller object or creature appears in an unoccupied square within range. It can make sounds, and it can move within its square but cannot leave it. Each of its defenses is 10. The illusion lasts until the end of the encounter, or until an attack hits it or a creature touches it.
An Insight or Perception check (DC 15 + one-half your level + your Intelligence modifier) also allows a creature to determine the illusion is a fake.

Level 3 Encounter Spells

Arcane Bolt — Wizard Attack 3

A silver arrow of force appears next to you. You gesture toward a foe, sending the arrow on an unerring path toward that enemy.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Force, Implement
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One creature
Effect: The target takes force damage equal to 5 + your Intelligence modifier + the enhancement bonus of your implement.

Level 6 Utility Spells

Glowering Wrath — Wizard Utility 6

You voice thunders above the din of the battlefield, casting fear and doubt into your foes.

Encounter ✦ Arcane
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Until the end of your next turn, you gain a +5 power bonus to Intimidate checks and increase the distance of any forced movement you cause by 2 squares.

Level 7 Encounter Spells

Charm of the Defender — Wizard Attack 7

You weave a skein of deceitful magic, tricking your foe to become a hero to its enemies.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Charm, Implement
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence vs. Will
Hit: You slide the target 3 squares. It is immobilized until the end of your next turn. In addition, until the end of your next turn, the first time an enemy starts its turn next to or moves to a square adjacent to the target, the target must make a melee basic attack as a free action against that enemy. The target gains a bonus to the attack roll and damage roll equal to your implement's enhancement bonus.

Level 10 Utility Spells

Words of Deceit — Wizard Utility 10

Your words move in a spiral, folding into themselves to deceive your enemies. You weave a magical attack into them that remains in your grasp should your foe's mind prove too strong to overcome.

Encounter ✦ Arcane
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Until the end of your next turn, you gain a +5 power bonus to Bluff checks and you retain the use of any single-target, encounter charm spells that miss.

Level 13 Encounter Spells

Arcane Arrows — Wizard Attack 13

You create a pair of arcane darts and send them speeding toward your enemy. No amount of armor or arcane defenses can protect it.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Force, Implement
Standard Action **Ranged** 20
Target: One creature, or two creatures that are adjacent to each other
Effect: Each target takes force damage equal to 10 + your Intelligence modifier + your implement's enhancement bonus.

Level 16 Utility Spells

Words of Truth — Wizard Utility 16

Arcane magic infuses your demands, forcing the creature that cowers before you to answer them without hesitation.

Daily ✦ Arcane
Minor Action **Ranged** 2
Target: One creature that is not involved in combat and that is lower level than you
Effect: You ask the creature one question, and it must answer truthfully.

Level 17 Encounter Spells

Charm of False Glory — Wizard Attack 17

Your foe shouts in triumph as it suddenly turns against its allies. Your magic twists its sight and mind, causing it to see enemies where allies stand.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Charm, Implement
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence vs. Will
Hit: Slide the target a number of squares equal to its speed. It is immobilized until the end of your next turn. In addition, until the end of your next turn, whenever an enemy starts its turn next to or moves to a square adjacent to the target, the target must make a melee basic attack as a free action against that enemy. The target gains a bonus to the attack roll and damage roll equal to your implement's en hancement bonus. Each time it hits with this attack, you can slide the target 2 squares.

Level 23 Encounter Spells

Arcane Volley — Wizard Attack 23

You launch a fusillade of arcane darts and send them speeding toward your enemies. No amount of armor or arcane defenses can protect your foes.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Force, Implement
Standard Action **Ranged** 20
Target: One creature, or two or three creatures that are adjacent to at least one other target.
Effect: Each target takes force damage equal to 5 + your Intelligence modifier + your implement's enhancement bonus. If you have selected only two targets, increase the damage each target takes by 5. If you have selected only one target, instead increase the damage it takes by 10.

Level 27 Encounter Spells

Charm of Puppet Strings — Wizard Attack 27

As your magic clouds your foe's mind, it shrieks in fury and leaps from one of its allies to the next, hewing at them with a madman's fury.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Charm, Implement
Standard Action **Ranged** 20
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence vs. Will
Hit: The target is dominated until the end of your next turn. In addition, at the start of the target's next turn, you can slide it its speed. Until the end of your next turn, whenever an enemy starts its turn next to or moves to a square adjacent to the target, the target must make a melee basic attack as a free action against that enemy. The target gains a bonus to the attack roll and damage roll equal to your imple ment's enhancement bonus.

About the Author

Mike Mearls is the Lead Designer for the Dungeons & Dragons® roleplaying game. His recent credits include *H1: Keep on the Shadowfell*™ and *Player's Handbook*® 2.

Class Acts: The Duelist Rogue

By Mike Mearls
Illustrations by Sarah Stone

Some rogues use stealth and trickery to defeat their enemies. Others combine agility with an unmatched talent for the blade to overcome their foes. A duelist rogue relies on reflexes and cunning to hone his or her skill to a razor's edge.

A duelist rogue focuses his or her training on melee combat. In a duelist rogue's hands, a rapier or other blade becomes a tool for attack, defense, and trickery. Compared to other rogues, the duelist is better at fighting alone, since the duelist's exploits allow him or her to boost defenses. The duelist is also good at isolating and overcoming a single opponent, since he or she has some options that grant sneak attack damage without a flank.

Level 1 At-Will Exploits

Duelist's Flurry — Rogue Attack 1

You move your blade quickly, stinging your foe with a series of cuts and slashes. Each slice does little damage, but when combined, they form a deadly threat.

At-Will ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Requirement: You must be wielding a light blade.
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity vs. AC
Hit: Dexterity modifier damage, slide the target 1 square, and you shift 1 square. You can deal sneak attack damage even if you do not have combat advantage with this attack.
Level 21: 5 + Dexterity modifier damage.

Level 1 Encounter Exploit

Opening Move — Rogue Attack 1

While your enemies fumble for weapons or stand and gape, you leap into the fray to score a deadly hit.

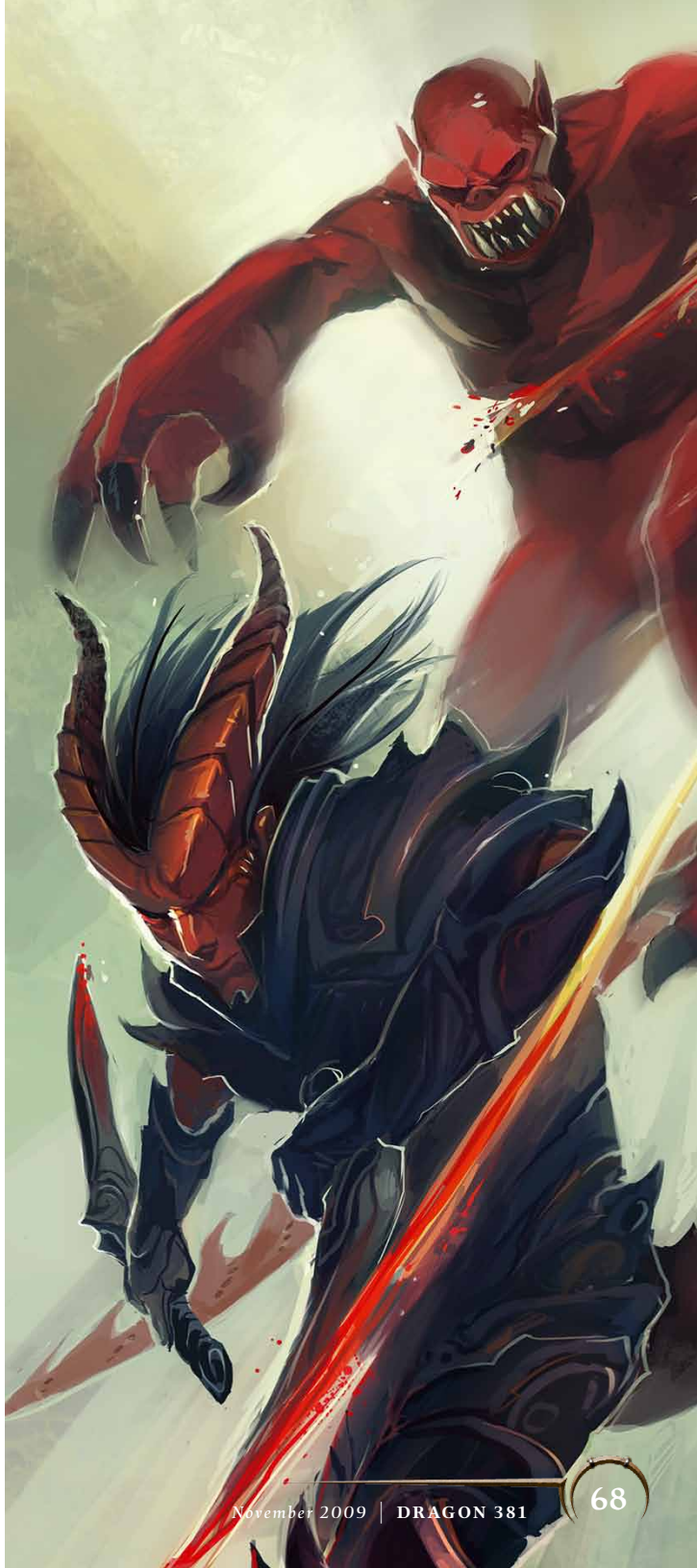
Encounter ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Requirement: You must be wielding a light blade.
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Dexterity modifier damage.
Effect: You gain a power bonus to AC and Reflex equal to your Charisma modifier until the end of your next turn.
Artful Dodger: The defense bonus equals 2 + your Charisma modifier.

Level 1 Daily Exploit

Duelist's Prowess — Rogue Attack 1

The way you stand appears to allow a foe an opening, but in truth your skill is such that you use your foe's attack to draw it in for your own quick strike.

Daily ✦ Martial, Stance
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Until the stance ends, each time an enemy hits or misses you, you can make the following attack against it.
Immediate Interrupt **Melee** weapon
Requirement: You must be wielding a light blade.
Trigger: An enemy adjacent to you attacks you
Target: The triggering enemy
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex
Hit: 1[W] + Dexterity modifier damage.



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Level 2 Utility Exploit

Agile Footwork — Rogue Utility 2

Though your foe wants to move in closely, you'd rather keep your distance, so you nimbly move away.

Encounter ✦ Martial
Immediate Reaction **Personal**
Trigger: An enemy ends its turn adjacent to you
Effect: You shift 3 squares.

Level 3 Encounter Exploit

Strike and Move — Rogue Attack 3

You dart in, slash with your blade, and dart away before your enemy can answer.

Encounter ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Requirement: You must be wielding a light blade.
Effect: You can shift a number of squares equal to your Charisma modifier. At any point during this shift, you can make the following attack.
Artful Dodger: You instead shift 2 + your Charisma modifier squares.
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Dexterity modifier damage.

Level 5 Daily Exploit

Duelist's Demand — Rogue Attack 5

You hem your foe in with a series of deadly strikes. It cannot move as long as your weapon is ready to strike.

Daily ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Requirement: You must be wielding a light blade.
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Dexterity modifier damage, and the target is immobilized and grants combat advantage to you. This effect ends if the target ends its turn and you are not adjacent to it.
Miss: Half damage, and the target is immobilized and grants combat advantage to you until the end of your next turn.

Level 6 Utility Exploit

Swift Parry — Rogue Utility 6

You deflect your enemy's attack, causing the force behind its blow to send it off balance and leaving it vulnerable to your next attack.

Encounter ✦ Weapon
Immediate Interrupt **Personal**
Requirement: You must be wielding a light blade.
Trigger: You are hit by a melee attack
Effect: You gain a bonus to defenses against the attack equal to your Charisma modifier, and you gain combat advantage against the triggering attacker until the end of your next turn.

Level 7 Encounter Exploit

Lashing Blade — Rogue Attack 7

A foe near you feels the sting of your blade as you lash out, but you attack so with such agility that this enemy has a problem returning the favor.

Encounter ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Effect: Until the end of your next turn, you can make the following at-will attack.
Opportunity Action **Melee** weapon
Requirement: You must be wielding a light blade.
Trigger: An enemy starts its turn in or enters a square adjacent to you
Target: The triggering enemy
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex
Hit: 1[W] + Dexterity modifier damage, and the target takes a penalty to attacks against you equal to your Charisma modifier until the end of your next turn.
Artful Dodger: The attack penalty equals 2 + your Charisma modifier.

Level 13 Encounter Exploit

Vaulting Charge — Rogue Attack 13

You rush forward and leap into the air, skewering a foe that thought it was safe behind its allies.

Encounter ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Requirement: You must be wielding a light blade.
Effect: You shift your speed before making the following attack, and you can move through enemies' spaces. You gain a power bonus to AC equal to your Charisma modifier until the end of your next turn.
Artful Dodger: The AC bonus equals 2 + your Charisma modifier.
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity vs. AC, or Dexterity vs. Reflex if the target has not yet acted in combat.
Hit: 3[W] + Dexterity modifier damage.

Level 17 Encounter Exploit

Path of the Blade — Rogue Attack 17

You slash at your enemies, forcing them to part before you as you rush your intended enemy.

Encounter ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Requirement: You must be wielding a light blade.
Effect: You can shift a number of squares equal to 2 + your Charisma modifier. Two times during this shift, you can make an attack, each time against a different enemy adjacent to you.
Artful Dodger: You instead shift 4 + your Charisma modifier squares.
Free Action **Melee** weapon
Primary Target: One enemy
Primary Attack: Dexterity vs. Will
Hit: 2[W] + Dexterity modifier damage and you slide the creature 1 square.
Secondary Target: One enemy other than the primary target
Secondary Attack: Dexterity vs. Will
Hit: 2[W] + Dexterity modifier damage, and you slide the creature 1 square.

Level 23 Encounter Exploit

Shimmering Blade — Rogue Attack 23

You stand ready to counter each of your enemies' moves, your blade a blur of steel as you strike again and again.

Encounter ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Effect: You gain a power bonus to AC and Reflex equal to your Charisma modifier until the end of your next turn. Until the end of your next turn, you can use the following attack.
Artful Dodger: The defense bonus equals 2 + your Charisma modifier.
Opportunity Action **Melee** weapon
Requirement: You must be wielding a light blade.
Trigger: An enemy makes a melee attack against you, starts its turn adjacent to you, or ends its turn adjacent to you
Target: The triggering enemy
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex
Hit: 2[W] + Dexterity modifier damage.

Level 27 Encounter Exploit

First and Final Strike — Rogue Attack 27

As your enemy fumbles for its weapon, you stride forward to deliver a deadly attack.

Encounter ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Requirement: You must be wielding a light blade.
Effect: You can shift your speed before making the following attack and can move through enemies' spaces. You gain a power bonus to AC equal to your Charisma modifier until the end of your next turn.
Artful Dodger: The AC bonus instead equals 2 + your Charisma modifier.
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity vs. Reflex
Hit: 4[W] + Dexterity modifier damage, or 5[W] + Dexterity modifier damage if the target has not yet acted in combat.

Rogue Feats

The duelist focuses on the rapier, with some of these rogues using a dagger or light shield in their off hands. The following feats allow a rogue to improve upon the duelist's fighting style.

Heroic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of any level who meets the prerequisites.

Blade and Buckler Duelist

Prerequisite: Rogue, proficiency with light shields

Benefit: The shield bonus to defenses from your light shield increase to +2.

Buckler Duelist

Prerequisite: Rogue, proficiency with light shields

Benefit: If a rogue power gives you a power bonus to defenses and you wield a light shield, increase that bonus by 1.

Duelist's Panache

Prerequisite: Charisma 13, Rogue

Benefit: You gain your Charisma modifier as a feat bonus to Acrobatics and Athletics checks.

Flash of the Blade

Prerequisite: Rogue, proficiency with rapiers

Benefit: If you hit a target with a weapon attack while you are using a rapier and you are the only creature adjacent to that target, you can deal Sneak Attack damage to the target even if you do not have combat advantage against that target.

Irrefutable Blade

Prerequisite: Rogue, proficiency with rapiers

Benefit: Whenever you miss with a rogue encounter attack while wielding a rapier, you deal damage equal to your Charisma modifier to the target you missed.

Versatile Duelist

Prerequisite: Rogue

Benefit: You gain proficiency with all one-handed, military heavy blades. If a rogue power requires you to wield a light blade, you can use that power with a one-handed heavy blade and can also deal your Sneak Attack damage while using a one-handed heavy blade with that power.

About the Author

Mike Mearls is found only in subterranean places, as he detests sunlight. He is greatly evil and considers the bulk of humanity (and its kin) as cattle to feed upon. He speaks only his own arcane language and several other weird tongues—purportedly those of terrible races of things which dwell in regions of the subterranean world far deeper than mankind has ever ventured.

Class Acts: Paladin

Winter's Knights: Paladins of the Raven Queen

By Arthur Wright
Illustrations by Sarah Stone

"The Raven Queen is our mistress. She holds death in her grasp, and each of us serves as an instrument of her will."

Each of the Raven Queen's followers embraces death; the demise of all living creatures is a natural progression of life. Those initiated into the Raven Queen's service find ways to utilize the powers of cold and death while serving their deific mistress. Holy warriors sworn to fate employ their deity-granted might to throw down cults of Orcus and bring death to those who avoid their properly appointed end.

Such celestial power isn't all astral radiance and divine glow. The Raven Queen lives in shadow, weaving it and reaching forth with winter's frigid claws to take all mortals into the beyond. Her knights do the same, wielding similar powers against their enemies to ensure that the cycles of death and destiny continue.

If you serve the Raven Queen, here you'll find the secrets of her paladins. Wield them well.

Level 1 Encounter Prayer

Stolen Life — **Paladin Attack 1**

You slam your weapon home, channeling your enemy's loss into healing.

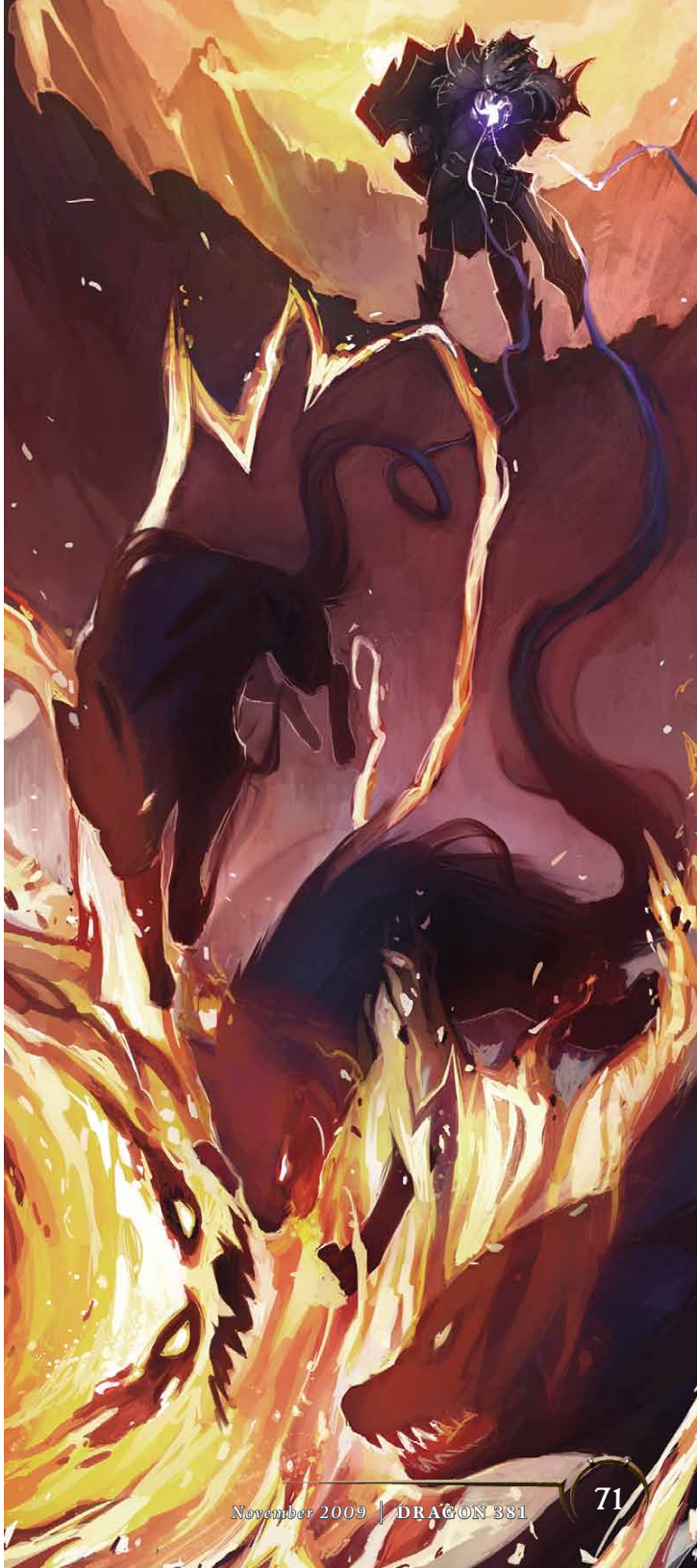
Encounter ✦ Divine, Healing, Necrotic, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier necrotic damage, and you or an ally within 5 squares of you regains a number of hit points equal to your Charisma modifier.

Level 1 Daily Prayer

Frost of Letherna — **Paladin Attack 1**

Ice and frost swirl around you, expanding quickly. While within this whirling blizzard, your enemies cannot escape you.

Daily ✦ Cold, Divine, Implement, Zone
Standard Action **Close** burst 2
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Charisma vs. Fortitude
Hit: 1d10 + Charisma modifier cold damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: The burst creates a zone of hindering frost that lasts until the end of your next turn. When any enemy enters the zone or starts its turn there, it is slowed. If the enemy is marked by you, it is immobilized until the end of your next turn instead.
Sustain Minor: The zone persists.



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Level 3 Encounter Prayer

Winter's Edge Paladin Attack 3

Your weapon is like the biting winds of winter, freezing your opponents in their tracks.

Encounter ✦ Cold, Divine, Weapon
Standard Action **Close** burst 1
Target: Each creature in burst
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Strength modifier cold damage, and the target is slowed until the end of your next turn. If it is marked by you, the target is immobilized until the end of your next turn instead.

Level 5 Daily Prayer

Shadow's Apathy Paladin Attack 5

With a solid strike, you sap your adversary's will to act.

Daily ✦ Divine, Necrotic, Reliable, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Strength modifier necrotic damage, and the target is weakened and slowed (save ends both).

Level 6 Utility Prayer

Winter's Fated Stance Paladin Utility 6

A murder of ghostly ravens hover about you, warding you against cold and death.

Daily ✦ Divine, Stance
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Until the stance ends, you gain resist cold and necrotic equal to 5 + your Wisdom or Charisma modifier. You can voluntarily end the stance as a free action to gain +2 to a defense of your choice until the end of your next turn.

Level 7 Encounter Prayer

Ravenfrost Strike Paladin Attack 7

Black frost covers your weapon, fixing your foe's place and its attention on you.

Encounter ✦ Cold, Divine, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Strength modifier cold damage, and the target is immobilized and subject to your divine sanction until the end of your next turn.

Level 9 Daily Prayer

Shadow Blades of Shared Doom Paladin Attack 9

As your attack lands, shadowy blades spring from your foe to slice those nearby and draw ire upon you.

Daily ✦ Divine, Necrotic, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Primary Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage. Make a secondary attack.
Secondary Target: Each enemy adjacent to the primary target
Secondary Attack: Strength vs. Will
Hit: 1[W] + Charisma modifier necrotic damage, and the target is subject to your divine sanction until the end of your next turn.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: The target is subject to your divine sanction until the end of your next turn.

Level 10 Utility Prayers

Winter's Arrival Paladin Utility 10

You step through deep shadow to chase your foe, bringing icy ground back with you.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Teleportation
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You teleport a number of squares equal to 1 + your Charisma modifier, to a space adjacent to an enemy marked by you. All squares adjacent to you are difficult terrain until the end of your next turn.

Deathguide's Stance Paladin Utility 10

Muttering devotions, you can channel the death that's all around you into life.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Healing, Stance
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Until the stance ends, whenever a nonminion enemy within 5 squares of you is bloodied or reduced to 0 hit points, you or an ally within 5 squares of you regains a number of hit points equal to 5 + your Charisma modifier.

Level 13 Encounter Prayer

Letherna's Hounds Paladin Attack 13

Shadowy hounds materialize and spring at your enemies, dragging them to your feet.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Implement, Necrotic
Standard Action **Close** burst 2
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Charisma vs. Fortitude
Hit: 1d10 + Charisma modifier necrotic damage. The target falls prone, and you pull it 1 square to a space adjacent to you.

Level 15 Daily Prayer

Darkness Unleashed — Paladin Attack 15

With a howl of defiance, you catch your breath and loose a sapping wave of darkness against your assailants.

Daily ✦ Divine, Implement, Necrotic
Free Action **Close** burst 1
Trigger: You use your second wind
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Charisma vs. Will
Hit: 2d10 + Charisma modifier necrotic damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: If you score a critical hit on any of this power's attack rolls, you regain the ability to use your second wind this encounter.

Level 17 Encounter Prayer

Icy Clutches — Paladin Attack 17

You drive your foe to the ground, commanding it to stay down or suffer the consequences.

Encounter ✦ Cold, Divine, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier cold damage, and the target is subject to your divine sanction until the end of your next turn, and it falls prone. Until the target is no longer subject to this divine sanction, if it stands up, it takes damage as if it made an attack that didn't include you.

Level 19 Daily Prayer

Deathguide's Sanction — Paladin Attack 19

You strike and sanction your foe, and your allies can siphon its life force with each successful attack.

Daily ✦ Divine, Healing, Radiant, Reliable, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 4[W] + Charisma modifier radiant damage, and the target is under the effect of your divine sanction (save ends). Until this divine sanction ends, on each of your allies' turns, the first time that ally hits the target, he or she regains a number of hit points equal to 5 + your Charisma modifier.

Level 22 Utility Prayer

Fateful Cleansing — Paladin Utility 22

Your intimacy with mortality allows you to remove the doom of impending death from others.

Daily ✦ Divine, Healing
Minor Action **Melee** touch
Target: One creature
Effect: You spend a healing surge without regaining hit points, and the target regains hit points as if it had spent two healing surges. It can make a saving throw against all effects that a save can end.

Level 23 Encounter Prayer

Freezing Censure — Paladin Attack 23

With a single prayer, winter comes early, encasing your foe in a crust of rime.

Encounter ✦ Cold, Divine, Implement
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Target: One creature
Attack: Charisma vs. Will
Hit: 2d8 + Charisma modifier cold damage, and the target is restrained until the end of your next turn.

Level 27 Encounter Prayers

Charge of the Dead — Paladin Attack 27

Shades of the honored dead join you in your onslaught.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Necrotic, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Primary Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Strength damage. Make a secondary attack that is a close burst 2 using your implement.
Secondary Target: The primary target and each enemy in close burst
Secondary Attack: Charisma vs. Reflex
Hit: 1d8 + Charisma modifier necrotic damage.
Special: When charging, you can use this power in place of a melee basic attack.

Level 29 Daily Prayers

Sorrowsworn Smite — Paladin Attack 29

With a weapon's thrust, you bring sorrow, blindness, and death.

Daily ✦ Divine, Necrotic, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 4[W] + Strength modifier necrotic damage, and the target is blinded and cannot regain hit points (save ends).
Miss: Half damage, and the target cannot regain hit points until the end of your next turn.

New Feats

Two feats can provide your paladin with further options while serving the Raven Queen.

Heroic Tier Feat

The feat in this section is available to a character of any level who meets the prerequisites.

Channel Divinity: In Death, Life

Prerequisite: Channel Divinity class feature, must worship the Raven Queen

Benefit: You can use the *in death, life* power.

In Death, Life — Feat Power

Your powers of death revitalize your body.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Healing
Free Action **Close** burst 3
Trigger: You bloody an enemy or reduce an enemy to 0 hit points
Target: You or one ally in burst
Effect: You spend a healing surge and the target gains hit points as if it spent the healing surge.

Paragon Tier Feat

The feat in this section is available to a character of 11th level or higher who meets the prerequisites.

Fated Survival

Prerequisite: 11th level, Cha 13

Benefit: When you fail a saving throw, you gain a +2 feat bonus to the next saving throw you make against the same effect.

New Item

Paladins of the Raven Queen frequently opt to wear this cloak, though sometimes it is seen upon other followers.

Raven Cloak — Level 9+

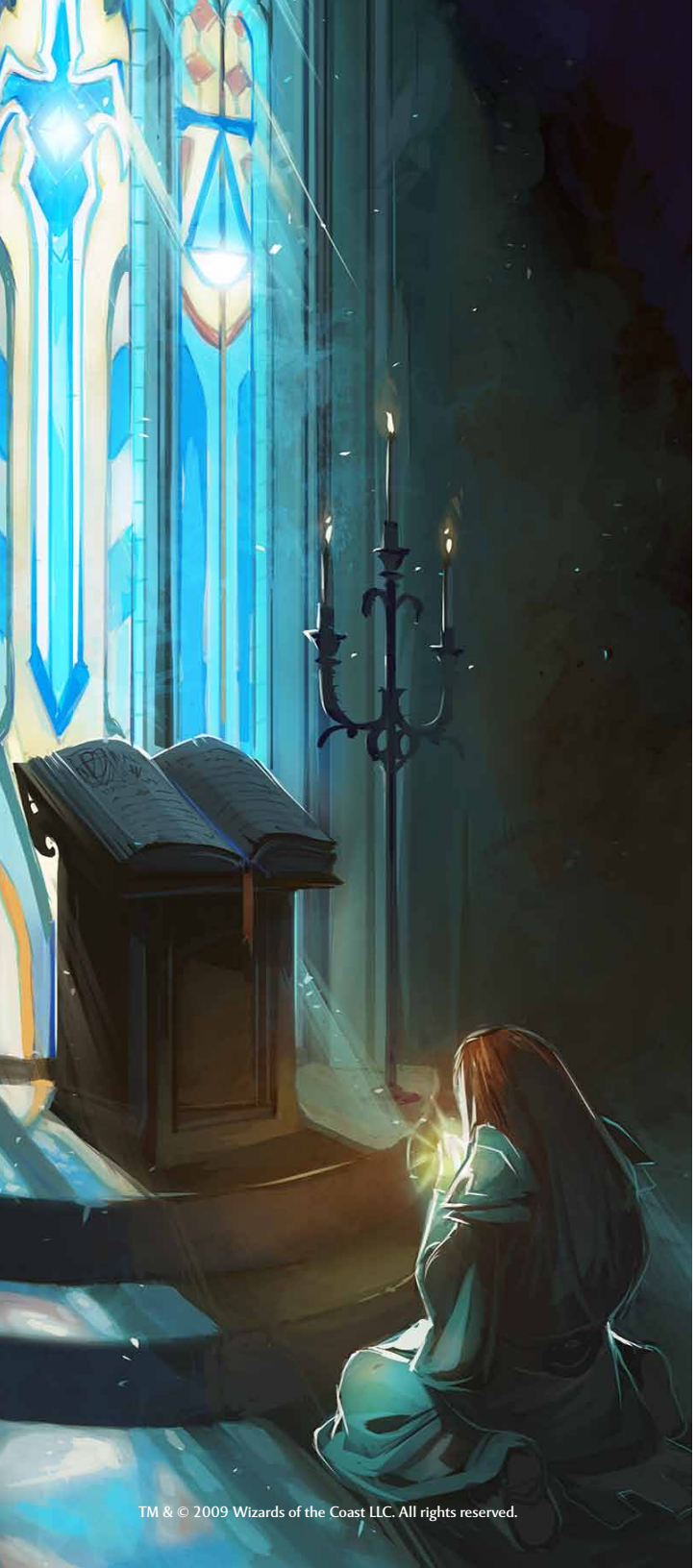
Emblazoned with the symbol of the Raven Queen, this cloak protects you from the dead of winter and death.

Lvl 9	+2	4,200 gp	Lvl 24	+5	525,000 gp
Lvl 14	+3	21,000 gp	Lvl 29	+6	2,625,000 gp
Lvl 19	+4	105,000 gp			

Item Slot: Neck
Enhancement: Fortitude, Reflex, and Will defense
Property: You gain resist 5 cold and resist 5 necrotic.
Level 19 or 24: You gain resist 10 cold and resist 10 necrotic.
Level 29: You gain resist 15 cold and resist 15 necrotic.
Power (Daily): No Action. *Trigger:* You fail a saving throw. *Effect:* Reroll that saving throw with a +5 bonus. If the saving throw is a death saving throw, you gain a +10 bonus.

About the Author

Arthur Wright is father of three living in upstate New York. A long time gamer and D&D® player, he has played every incarnation of the D&D game. When he's not playing games or spending time with his family, Arthur is pursuing his dreams of having a work related to the D&D game published, having a D&D book with "Arthur Wright" in the credits, and someday appearing on the show *Survivor*. (Love that reality television.) One down, two to go.



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Class Acts: Invoker

Adherents of Kalandurren

By Ari Marmell
Illustrations by Sarah Stone

Though many thousands of years have passed and even the gods have largely moved on and forgotten, some among the mortal beings refuse to abandon their memories of Amoth the Just. A god of justice and mercy, the Lord of Kalandurren was one of the greatest lights of the pantheon—until he was murdered by a trio of foul demon lords.

Only in recent years, however, have sages and religious leaders learned that some of the divine essence of Amoth—indeed, of many of history's deceased gods—yet remains in the cosmos, spread throughout the reaches of the Astral Sea.

And that knowledge has brought with it the rise of a new cabal: invokers devoted to the memory and precepts of murdered Amoth. These secretive invokers channel, in part, the lingering might of Amoth, rather than drawing on the power of one or more deities. Called both the Adherents of Kalandurren and the Arbiters of Forgotten Justice, this cabal seeks to spread justice in Amoth's memory—though *interpretation* of "justice" is, as always, an individual decision, and some members drift far from the path of the greater good. The cabal's teachings are formally available only in a select few temples and monasteries, but rare invokers have stumbled upon these techniques on their own.

Amoth's Grace [Divinity]

Prerequisite: Channel Divinity class feature

Benefit: You can invoke the power of your deity to use *Amoth's Grace*.

Channel Divinity: Amoth's Grace **Feat Power**

Through Amoth's power, you channel strength to your allies, allowing them to stand fast against evil.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Healing
Immediate Reaction **Ranged** 5
Trigger: You or an ally within range of you are either subject to a critical hit or bloodied by an attack
Effect: The triggering creature can spend a healing surge.
Special: You must take the Amoth's Grace feat to use this power.

New Invoker Powers

Although the Adherents of Kalandurren developed these powers, any invoker character can learn them with the DM's permission.

Level 6 Utility Prayer

Symbol of Vengeance Invoker Utility 6

A glyph of ancient meaning shimmers above your companion, allowing you to channel your divine might to strike those that intend your companion harm.

Daily ✦ Divine
Minor Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One ally
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, you can determine lines of sight and effect for your divine ranged or area at-will or encounter attacks from the target, rather than from yourself, as long as you have line of sight to the target.

Level 15 Attack Prayer

Eye of Dawn Invoker Attack 15

A light like the morning sun burns amid your foes, causing them to flinch away—and find themselves elsewhere.

Daily ✦ Divine, Implement, Radiant, Teleportation
Standard Action **Area** burst 2 within 10
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Wisdom vs. Fortitude
Hit: 4d6 + Wisdom modifier radiant damage, and you teleport the target to any other space in or adjacent to the burst.
Miss: Half damage, and you teleport the target 1 square.
Effect: You teleport each ally in the burst to any other space in or adjacent to the burst.

Level 16 Utility Prayer

Guidance of Heavenly Hands Invoker Utility 16

Even as you are yanked from your feet, divine power flows through you, guiding you gently to a safe destination.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Teleportation
Immediate Interrupt **Close** burst 10
Trigger: An enemy pushes, pulls, slides, or teleports you or an ally within range
Target: The creature subjected to forced movement
Effect: When the enemy moves the target, you teleport the target 5 squares instead of that movement.

Level 25 Attack Prayer

Penance of Amoth Invoker Attack 25

You blast your enemy with coruscating power. The power sinks deep into its soul and waits to punish your foe for further evildoing.

Daily ✦ Divine, Implement, Radiant
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Fortitude
Hit: 3d8 + Wisdom modifier radiant damage, and the target bears Amoth's penance (save ends). The first time on each of its turns that a creature bearing Amoth's penance makes a damage roll against an ally, that creature takes radiant damage equal to the damage rolled.
Miss: Half damage, and the target bears Amoth's penance until the end of your next turn.

Arbiter of Forgotten Justice

"Though Amoth is gone, all he stood for, all he fought for, remains. My very presence is proof—but if you require more, I shall be happy to deliver."

Prerequisite: Invoker, must adhere to Amoth's precepts.

Some invokers have learned to harness Amoth's lingering might by using the powers presented above, but a few—a rare but growing few—have gone further. They have devoted themselves in full to Amoth, spreading justice in his memory and drawing at least in part on his own surviving might to do so.

You are one of these select few. Whether you have dedicated yourself exclusively to Amoth's teachings, or serve other gods of justice in memory of Amoth, you draw upon the lingering energy of the murdered Lord of Kalandurren. As an arbiter of forgotten justice, you know that one must deal with the evils that plague mortals and gods alike. Their crimes must be punished—from simple human greed to the murder of Amoth.

Arbiter of Forgotten Justice Path Features

Retributive Action (11th level): You can spend an action point as an opportunity action when an ally within 20 squares of you becomes bloodied or drops to 0 hit points. When you do, you gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls until the end of your next turn, and you take a standard action.

Sliver of Justice (11th level): When you score a critical hit with a divine attack power, one ally of

your choice within 10 squares of the target regains a number of hit points equal to 5 + your Wisdom modifier.

Beacon of Justice (16th level): You can score critical hits with radiant attacks on a roll of 19–20. Against demons and devils, this range increases to 18–20.

Arbiter of Forgotten Justice Prayers

Smiting Blades — Arbiter of Forgotten Justice Attack 11

A burst of radiance not only chars your foe, but causes its steps to become unsteady.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Implement, Radiant
Standard Action **Area** burst 2 within 12
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Wisdom vs. Fortitude
Hit: 1d10 + Wisdom modifier radiant damage. If the target hits or misses you or an ally before the end of your next turn, it falls prone and is slowed until the end of your next turn.

Favor the Faithful — Arbiter of Forgotten Justice Utility 12

Through an act of supreme faith, you channel divine power and your own life force to shield your companions from harm.

Daily ✦ Divine
Immediate Interrupt **Close** burst 5
Trigger: An attack hits you or an ally within range
Target: The triggering creature
Effect: You spend a healing surge but regain no hit points. The target is completely unaffected by the attack, as though the original attack had not included the target.

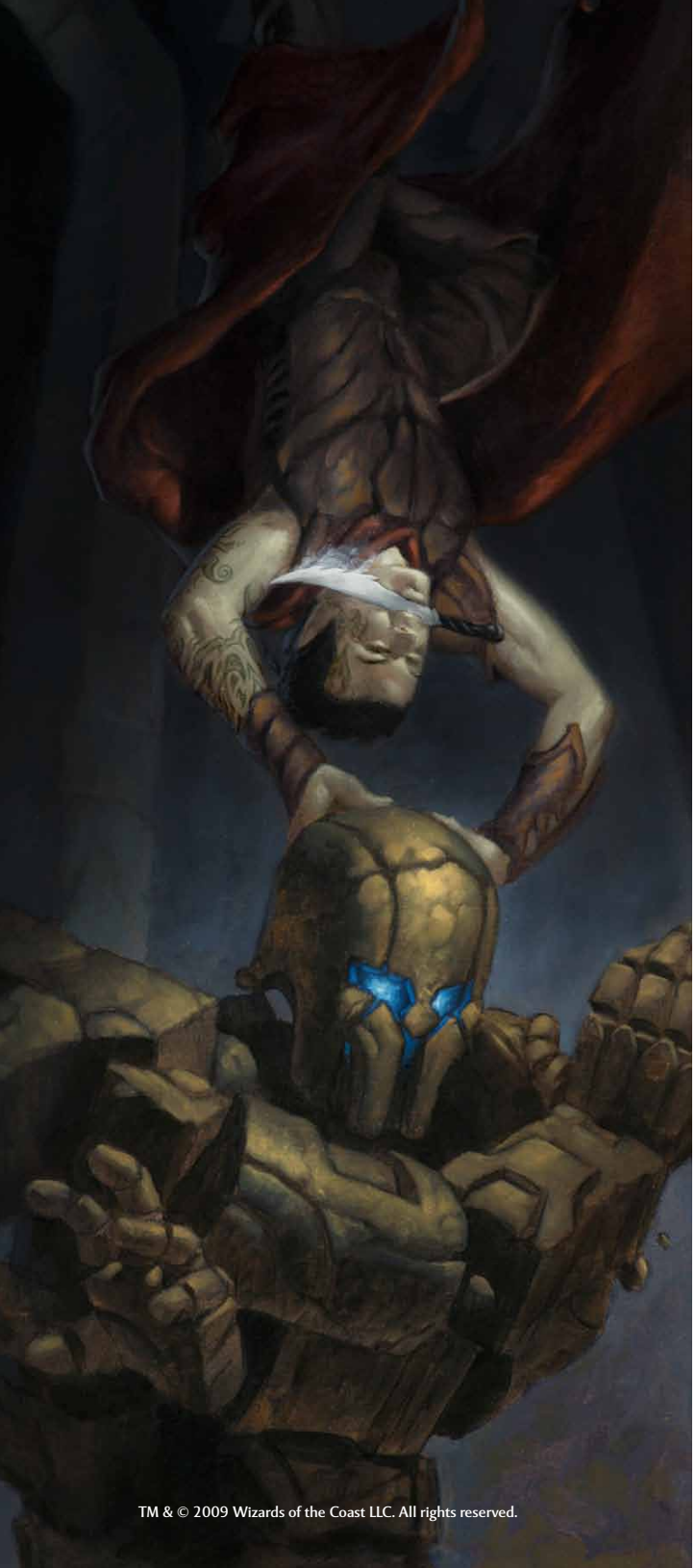
No Rest for the Wicked — Arbiter of Forgotten Justice Attack 20

Divine wrath pours from your soul and wraps itself around your foe in a searing shroud of justice.

Daily ✦ Divine, Implement, Radiant
Standard Action **Ranged** 20
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Fortitude
Hit: 3d6 + Wisdom modifier radiant damage.
Effect: When the target fails a saving throw, it takes 10 radiant damage and you can teleport it 3 squares (save ends).
Aftereffect: Ongoing 10 radiant damage (save ends).

About the Author

Ari Marmell was born in New York, moved to Houston when he was a year old, moved to Austin when he was 27, but has spent most of his life living in other worlds through a combination of writing and roleplaying games. He has been writing more or less constantly for the last dozen years, though he has only been paid for it the past five. He is the author of multiple roleplaying game supplements including work on Dungeons & Dragons®. Ari lives in Austin with his wife, George, and two cats.



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Power Play: Martial
The Skillful Warrior

By Ari Marmell
Illustration by Tyler Jacobson

As previewed in *Dragon* #379, *Player's Handbook*® 3 introduces "skill powers." This simple mechanic makes characters more customizable, allowing you to focus on a skill-centric build.

However, the options presented in *Player's Handbook* 3 might not provide enough opportunities for martial characters to focus their *fighting style* on a particular skill. If you've ever played the acrobatic rogue or the inexorable fighter, you definitely understand this concept.

The following array of new powers for several martial classes allows you to play an Endurance-focused fighter, an Athletics-focused ranger, an Acrobatics-focused rogue, or an Intimidate-focused warlord. Each of these has a specific skill as a prerequisite, plus an effect designed to make the power incorporate or emulate the use of that skill as part of its execution.

New Fighter Powers

Brazen Assault — Fighter Attack 5

Relying on your own resilience, you put yourself in danger, knowing that you can maneuver for a better attack.

Daily ✦ Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Prerequisite: You must be trained in Endurance.
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Strength modifier damage + Constitution modifier damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares.
Effect: You gain resist 5 to all damage, but grant combat advantage to all attacks. This effect lasts until the end of the encounter, or until you end it as a free action on your turn.

Revel in Pain — Fighter Attack 17

You grin widely as you focus the pain your foe wrought upon you and use it to move toward it with the hope of returning the pain.

Encounter ✦ Martial, Weapon
Immediate Reaction **Melee** 1
Prerequisite: You must be trained in Endurance.
Trigger: An enemy within 4 squares of you damages you with an attack
Target: The triggering creature
Effect: You can move your speed to a space adjacent to the target. If you do, you can make the following attack against the target.
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage, and you gain temporary hit points equal to half the damage of the triggering attack.

Goad of Blood — Fighter Attack 25

You pull out all the stops on your attacks, the damage you inflict pushing you onward.

Daily ✦ Martial, Stance
Minor Action **Personal**
Prerequisite: You must be trained in Endurance.
Effect: Until the stance ends, whenever you would make a melee basic attack, you can instead use one of your at-will melee attack powers or encounter melee attack powers. Whenever such an attack hits, you gain temporary hit points equal to 10 + your Constitution modifier.

New Ranger Powers

Predatory Charge — Ranger Attack 5

You lunge toward your foe, while your beast companion leaps on an enemy in your wake.

Daily ✦ Beast, Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Prerequisite: You must be trained in Athletics.
Target: One creature
Requirement: You must charge the primary target and use this power in place of a melee basic attack.
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage, and you push the target 1 square and shift into the square it formerly occupied.
Effect: Your beast companion charges an enemy, and the enemy falls prone on a hit. If that enemy attacked you with an opportunity attack during your turn, your beast companion gains a power bonus equal to your Wisdom modifier to the attack rolls and damage rolls on the secondary attack.

Strength of Earth — Ranger Attack 13

With a mighty heave, you leap into the air and wrap your arms about your foe, dragging it with you to the unyielding earth.

Encounter ✦ Martial Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** 1
Prerequisite: You must be trained in Athletics.
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. Reflex
Effect: You jump 3 squares vertically and 5 squares horizontally before making the attack. You can make the following attack at any point during the jump.
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage, and you knock the target prone.

Thunderfury Charge — Ranger Attack 25

You slip past your enemies, who are then overwhelmed by your beast companion.

Daily ✦ Beast, Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Prerequisite: You must be trained in Athletics.
Requirement: You must begin with your beast companion adjacent to you. You charge a target and use the following attack in place of a melee basic attack. Your movement during this charge does not provoke opportunity attacks.
Primary Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Strength modifier damage, and you push the target 1 square and shift into the space it formerly occupied.
Effect: Your beast companion shifts its speed to a space adjacent to you and makes the following secondary attack during its movement.
Secondary Target: Each creature to which you moved adjacent during your charge
Secondary Attack: Strength vs. Reflex
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage, and the target falls prone.

New Rogue Powers

Darting Strike — Rogue Attack 3

You move your weapon with blinding speed, striking a foe who didn't realize it was open to an attack.

Encounter ✦ Martial, Weapon
Opportunity Action **Melee** 1
Prerequisite: You must be trained in Acrobatics.
Trigger: An enemy within 2 squares of you makes a ranged or area attack, or moves without shifting or teleporting
Effect: You shift 2 squares to a space adjacent to the enemy and make the following attack with combat advantage.
Target: The triggering enemy
Attack: Dexterity vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Dexterity modifier damage.

Tumbling Strike — Rogue Attack 17

With great agility, you cross harsh terrain and weave through foes just before making your enemy regret it ever confronted you in battle.

Encounter ✦ Martial, Weapon
Minor Action **Melee** 1
Prerequisite: You must be trained in Acrobatics.
Effect: You shift your speed and make the following attack at any point during the shift. During this shift, you can shift through squares occupied by enemies and you ignore difficult terrain.
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Dexterity modifier damage.

Reaching Blade — Rogue Attack 25

Your skill allows you to take advantage of openings granted by foes even some distance away.

Daily ✦ Martial, Stance
Minor Action **Personal**
Prerequisite: You must be trained in Acrobatics.
Effect: Until the stance ends, whenever an ally within 3 squares of you hits with an opportunity attack, you can, as a free action, shift your speed to a space adjacent to the target of that attack and use a rogue at-will melee attack power against that target.

New Warlord Powers

Threatening Presence — Warlord Attack 7

You constantly move as though ready to attack, keeping your enemy's nerves frazzled.

Encounter ✦ Fear, Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** 1
Prerequisite: You must be trained in Intimidate.
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. Will
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage, and the target cannot mark your allies and cannot gain combat advantage against your allies until the end of your next turn.
Effect: Any ally marked by the target is no longer marked by the target.

Fearsome Thrust — Warlord Attack 13

Your enemy recoils before you—and right into the blades of your waiting allies.

Encounter ✦ Fear, Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** 1
Prerequisite: You must be trained in Intimidate.
Target: One enemy
Attack: Strength vs. Will
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage, and you slide the target 3 squares to a space adjacent to one of your allies. The target grants combat advantage to that ally until the start of your next turn.

Lingering Fear — Warlord Attack 25

So fearsome is your assault that your foe becomes timid about attacking your allies.

Daily ✦ Fear, Martial, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** 1
Prerequisite: You must be trained in Intimidate.
Attack: Strength vs. Will
Target: One enemy
Hit: 6[W] + Strength modifier damage, and until the end of the encounter, whenever the target hits or misses one of your allies, that ally gains combat advantage against the target until the start of the target's next turn.
Miss: Half damage, and until the end of your next turn, whenever the target hits or misses one of your allies, that ally gains combat advantage against the target until the start of the target's next turn.

About the Author

Ari Marmell has been shirking homework in favor of playing the D&D® game since he was nine years old. Thankfully, he now works in the industry, since shirking work for gaming tends to wreak havoc with the bills. He has written for quite a few of the industry's major companies, including White Wolf and, of course, Wizards of the Coast.

Winning Races: Halflings

Noble and questionable walks of life followed by the people of a nomadic culture

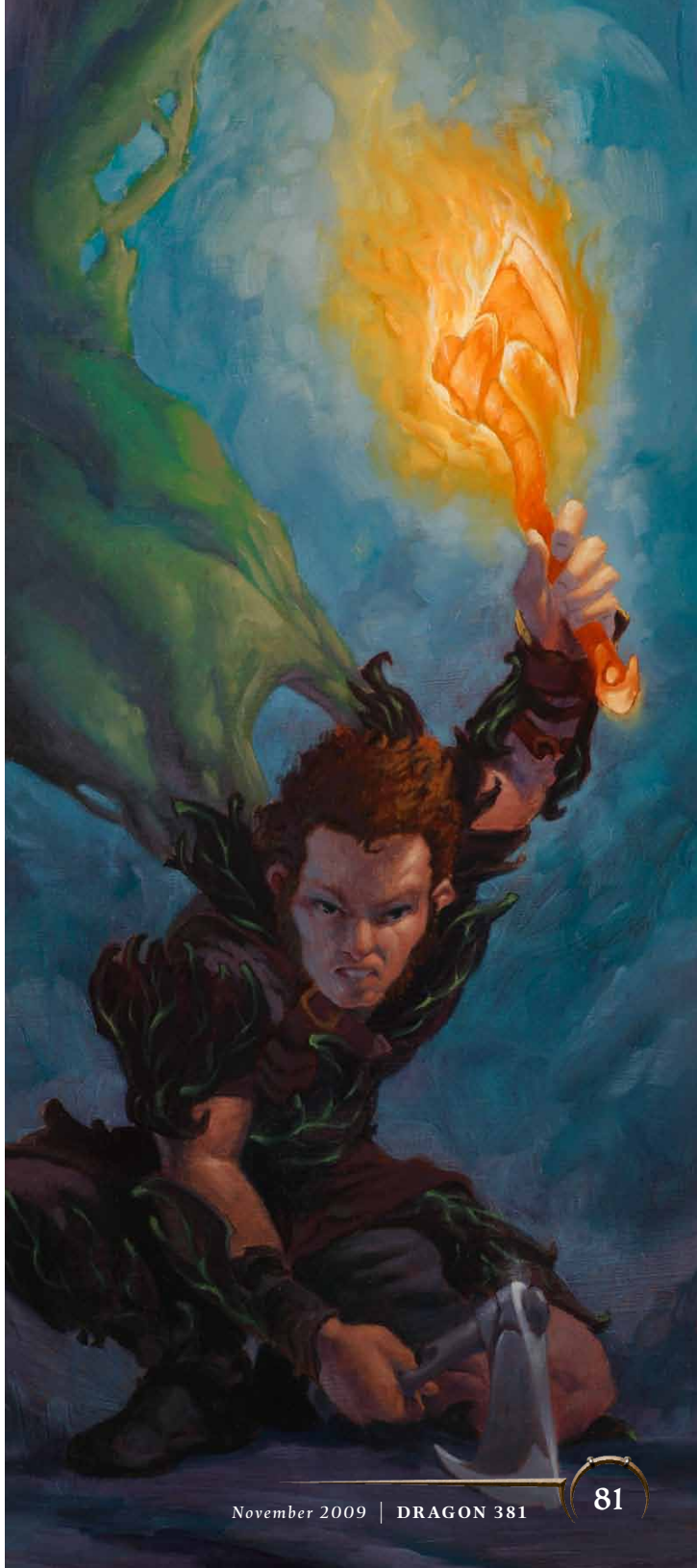
By Logan Bonner
Illustrations by Tyler Jacobson

Itinerant halflings exhibit a need for adventure and long to see new and different places and people. Though anyone who has met a halfling is familiar with their friendly, thrill-seeking nature, few realize the bonds that tie them to one another and to nature. Halfling clans have long navigated the twisting rivers of the world, following the guidance of their elders. As their barges, rafts, or canoes float through the wilderness, the halflings enjoy the toil of travel as well as the natural beauty all around them.

Clan members perform different duties for the benefit of their fellows. Highly respected scouts use their nature expertise to watch out for the clan on travels through the wild. Artisans repair boats or craft tools. Most clans don't have dedicated priests; their spiritual leaders seek the blessings of both gods and primal spirits. Expert fishers and gatherers provide much of the food for the clan.

Some members of the clan lie around or perform simple tasks, and these halflings don't seem very effective during travel. But that doesn't mean they aren't important to the halflings' lifestyle. When the halflings stop at a settlement along the riverbank, the traders, gamblers, storytellers, and dancers go ashore to earn money or trade goods to benefit the rest of the clan. While traveling, the merchants keep an eye out for rare items they can trade for a tidy profit. In settlements, they factor in the complex needs of all the places they frequent, collecting goods that have the highest relative demand elsewhere. Gamblers and entertainers use their race's reputation for geniality to attract potential gambling partners or audiences.

This divide rarely causes much conflict within halfling culture. Occasionally, a scout grows angry with a more civilized clan member who doesn't seem to be pulling his or her weight, or a trader berates a fisher for making the clan look unprofessional or inept at commerce. These disputes don't last long, though. Elders know that all members of the clan are important, and their wise words hasten the end of any argument.



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Halfling Gambler

Quick to ingratiate themselves with big folk they come across, halfling gamblers are de facto cultural envoys for their race.

Background

High Roller: Though you spent most of your time with the other members of your clan, you voyaged into other races' villages and towns whenever you could. Drawn to taverns and back alleys, you honed your skill at cards, dice, and other games of chance. Your need to find gambling partners might have drawn you into association with a "bad element." Perhaps you're hiding out from powerful people who feel you cheated them. Did you run afoul of the law in a place where gambling isn't permitted? Were your cards too good too many times and you got accused of cheating? Does the desire to gamble drag you off course when you're supposed to be accomplishing a different task?

Associated Skills: Bluff, Streetwise

Feats

The following feats can provide the gambler with useful tricks for dealing with thorny situations, including those caused during a gambling session.

Cooperative Chance

Prerequisite: Halfling, bard

Benefit: You can use your *second chance* power when an attack hits an ally within 10 squares of you. If the attack misses, you can slide that ally a number of squares equal to your Dexterity modifier.

Defensive Bluff

Prerequisite: Halfling

Benefit: When you use your second wind, you can, as part of the same action, make a Bluff check to gain combat advantage or to create a diversion to hide (*Player's Handbook* page 183).

Halfling Fast Talk

Prerequisites: Halfling

Benefit: You gain a +2 feat bonus to Bluff checks. In addition, if you make a Bluff check and dislike the result, you can expend your *second chance* power to reroll the check.

Indomitable Halfling

Prerequisites: Halfling

Benefit: You gain a +1 feat bonus to Will while bloodied. In addition, the bonus from your Bold racial feature also applies to saving throws against charm effects and ongoing psychic damage.

Know When to Fold

Prerequisites: Halfling

Benefit: While you're bloodied, the first time you leave a square on your turn, you don't provoke opportunity attacks from that movement.

Rigged Chance

Prerequisites: Halfling

Benefit: The first time you use your *second chance* racial power in an encounter, you regain the use of the power if the attack still hits you.

Magic Items

Halfling gamblers collect their magic items through trade, winnings, or reckless exploration. They prefer items that enhance their luck, or ones that are ostentatious enough to draw attention in gambling halls. If they can look like wealthy rubes going into a game, it's easier for them to come out ahead.

Dice of Auspicious Fortune Level 11

The faces of these wooden dice show symbols the halflings associate with good luck.

Wondrous Item 9,000 gp

Power (Daily): Standard Action. *Effect:* Roll 3 d20s. The results are "stored" in these dice until the end of your next extended rest. Using this power removes any results previously stored in the dice.

Power (Encounter): No Action. *Effect:* Replace the result of a d20 you just rolled with one of the results stored in the dice. This removes the stored result from the dice.

Lucky Halfling's Weapon Level 9+

The reeds that wrap this weapon's handgrip are woven in a pattern kept secret by halfling tribes.

Lvl 9	+2	4,200 gp	Lvl 24	+5	525,000 gp
Lvl 14	+3	21,000 gp	Lvl 29	+6	2,625,000 gp
Lvl 19	+4	105,000 gp			

Weapon: Any

Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d6 damage per plus

Property: If you are a halfling, you deal 1 extra damage on attacks made with this weapon as an item bonus. When you use your *second chance* power, the extra damage increases to 2 until the end of the encounter.

Level 14: 2 extra damage as an item bonus, 3 after using *second chance*.

Level 24: 3 extra damage as an item bonus, 4 after using *second chance*.

Power (Daily): Free Action. *Trigger:* You make a damage roll and dislike the result. *Effect:* You can reroll any [W] dice or critical dice you rolled for this weapon.

Halfling Scout

To protect and provide for their clanmates on long journeys through the wild, scouts navigate, keep watch, and hunt. The ancient ways appeal to scouts, who see the adventure of travel as the most important part of halfling life.

Background

River Scout: You know the courses of winding rivers and the locations of churning rapids. Any expedition you lead is sure to go smoothly, for your knowledge and survival skills are unsurpassed. You even share a rapport with wild creatures, and you know their ways. Is there a land you've always wanted to explore, but haven't yet? Do you consider yourself one with nature or above it? Did one of your journeys go poorly, taking your followers to their deaths?

Associated Skills: Athletics, Nature

Feats

Being the wild areas of the world can lead to a variety of dangers, and the following feats help halfling scouts meet the challenges they face.

Halfling Short Bow Hunter

Prerequisites: Halfling

Benefit: When you use a short bow, it gains the brutal 2 property and its range increases to 20/40 squares.

Prime Beast Strike

Prerequisites: Halfling, ranger, Beast Mastery class feature

Benefit: If none of your allies is nearer to your target than either you or your beast companion, you gain a +1 bonus to melee and ranged attack rolls against that target.

River-Born Ritualist

Prerequisites: Halfling

Benefit: You have mastered the Animal Messenger and Water Walk rituals, and can perform them as if you had the Ritual Caster feat. You can use these rituals without paying the component cost, each once per day.

In addition, you gain a +2 feat bonus to Nature checks.

Second Step

Prerequisites: Halfling

Benefit: When you use your *second chance* racial power, and the enemy rerolling its attack is larger than you, you can shift half your speed as a free action after the attack is completed.

Magic Items

Halfling scouts feel a kinship toward fish and birds they see along the rivers. They call on the power of these creatures, both in name and in form.

Opal Carp — Level 6

This opal lozenge is carved with scales, and can transform into a giant fish.

Wondrous Item 1,800 gp

Power (Daily ✦ Conjuration): Standard Action. Use this figurine to conjure a carp with opalescent scales (see below for statistics). There must be a body of water adjacent to you in which the carp can appear; otherwise the figurine can't be activated. As a free action, you can spend a healing surge when activating this item to give the creature temporary hit points equal to your healing surge value.

While riding the carp, you breathe water as if it were air and can speak normally while underwater. The carp can carry one Medium or Small character weighing no more than 300 pounds. If more than 300 pounds are placed on it, the creature disappears and cannot be conjured again until after an extended rest.

See *Adventurer's Vault*, page 180, for complete details on *figurines of wondrous power*.

Opal Carp

Medium natural animate (aquatic, mount)

Initiative as conjurer — **Senses** Perception +6

HP 11; **Bloodied** 5

AC 20; **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 19, **Will** 18

Speed swim 8

⊕ **Slam** (standard; at-will)

+11 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage.

Opal Glamer (while mounted by a friendly rider of 6th level or higher) ✦ **Mount**

The carp and its rider have concealment against all ranged and area attacks. When an attack misses the carp or its rider, the carp can shift 1 square as a free action.

Small Rider

A Small creature can ride the carp, even though the carp isn't Large.

Alignment	Unaligned	**Languages** –
Str 10 (+3)	**Dex** 19 (+7)	**Wis** 16 (+6)
Con 14 (+5)	**Int** 2 (-1)	**Cha** 10 (+3)

Scout's Bow — Level 8+

This wooden bow is adorned with images that resemble raptors' eyes. They keep a constant watch over the most evasive foes.

Lvl 8	+2	3,400 gp	Lvl 23	+5	425,000 gp
Lvl 13	+3	17,000 gp	Lvl 28	+6	2,125,000 gp
Lvl 18	+4	85,000 gp			

Weapon: Bow, crossbow

Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d6 damage per plus

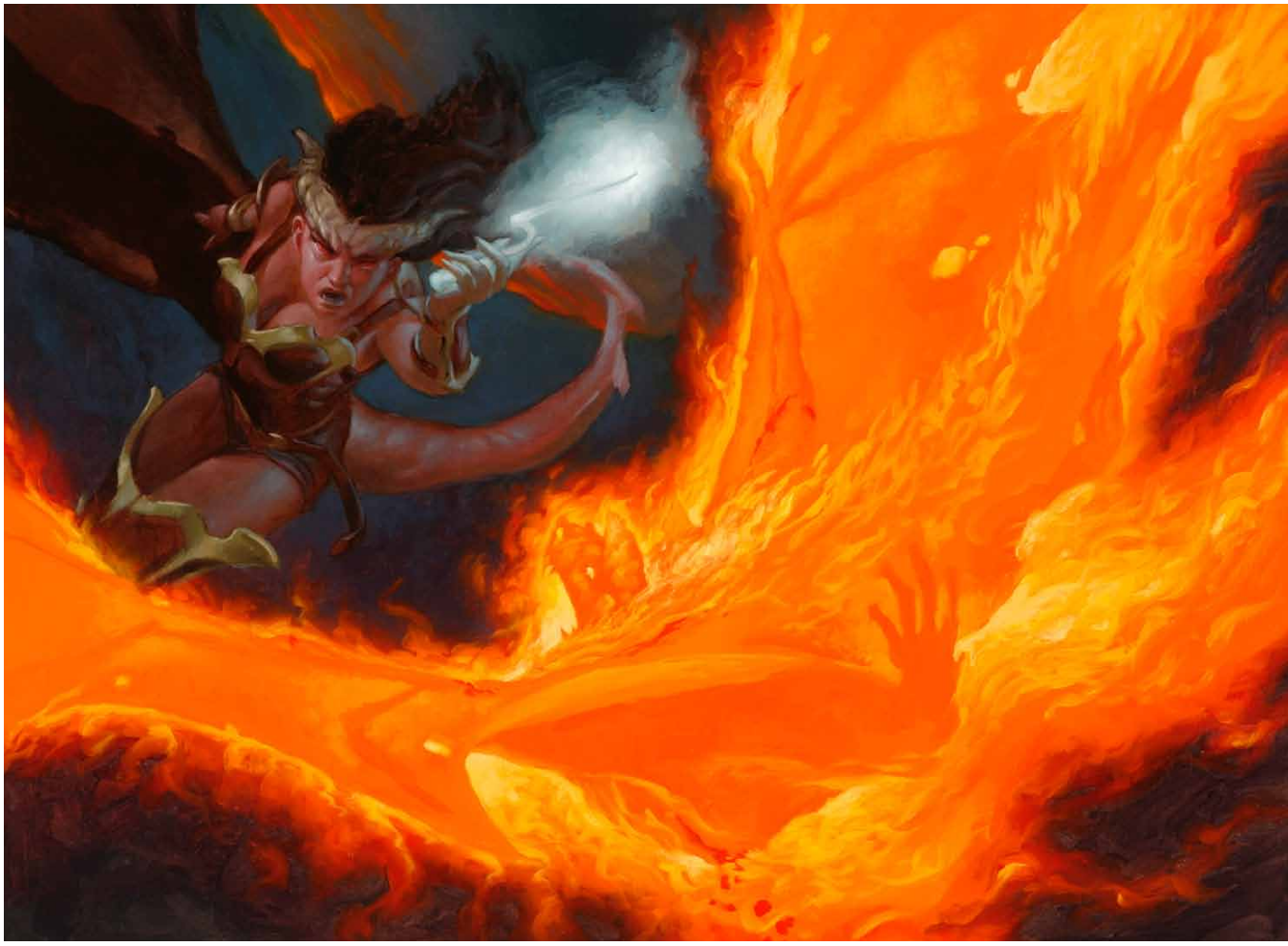
Power (Daily): Free Action. *Trigger:* You hit an enemy with an attack using this weapon. *Effect:* You know where the enemy is until the end of the encounter, and ignore concealment and cover when attacking that enemy. The target benefits from total concealment and superior cover as normal.

About the Author

Logan Bonner has worked on *D&D Miniatures*™, *Forgotten Realms*® *Player's Guide*, *Adventurer's Vault*™, *Player's Handbook 2*®, and *Arcane Power* in his time as a designer at Wizards of the Coast. He has designed both familiars and alchemy, encouraging people to be both social and anti-social.

Winning Races: Tieflings
Secrets of Bael Turath

By Mike Mearls
Illustrations by Tyler Jacobsonr



When the humans of Bael Turath struck their deal with the lords of Hell, they earned more than a dramatic change to their appearance. As part of the pact, they learned new fighting techniques, mastered diabolic spells, and received a stockpile of weapons and armor forged in the depths of Hell.

Although Bael Turath fell, many of the techniques used by its warriors remained. Bael Turath had many enemies, and to this day tieflings have a reputation for duplicity, wrath, and evil. Many of the specialized fighting schools faded from memory, stamped out by their enemies or lost in the chaos of the empire's collapse. A few persist to this day, though, passed down from one generation to the next as a reminder of what was and, perhaps, what might be again.

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The Crimson Legion

The warriors of the Crimson Legion were paladin/warlocks who worshiped Asmodeus and entered into diabolic pacts. Their combination of arcane and divine magic made them formidable opponents.

Today, the traditions of the Crimson Legion continue but have shifted and changed. The survivors believed that Asmodeus had turned his back on the empire despite the pact between them. Thus, the warriors of the Crimson Legion still enter into eldritch pacts with diabolic powers, but they now ally with other gods to strike at Asmodeus. By turning the power of Hell against itself, they seek to avenge their fallen empire.

Most members of the Crimson Legion worship Kord, Ioun, and Bahamut. However, their dabbling into arcane magic makes them suspicious figures, even as they attain victory after victory against Asmodeus's followers.

Heroic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of any level who meets the prerequisites.

Crimson Legionnaire

Prerequisite: Paladin, warlock

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls with your paladin and paladin paragon path attack powers against creatures under your Warlock's Curse.

Crimson Fire

Prerequisite: Paladin, warlock, *divine challenge* power

Benefit: Against a creature marked by your *divine challenge* and under your Warlock's Curse, you use d10s for your Warlock's Curse damage.

Warlock's Wrath

Prerequisite: Tiefling, warlock

Benefit: You use d8s for your Warlock's Curse damage. In addition, you replace *infernal wrath* with *warlock's wrath*.

Warlock's Wrath — Tiefling Racial Power

Arcane magic roars from you in a fiery storm, creating a vortex of energy around you.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Fire
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: You fill your space and the squares around it with whirling fire. Until the end of your next turn, you gain a bonus to all defenses equal to your Charisma modifier, and each enemy that attacks you takes fire damage equal to half your level + your Intelligence modifier.

Wrath of the Crimson Legion

Prerequisite: Tiefling, paladin

Benefit: When you make a melee basic attack, you can use your Charisma instead of Strength for the attack roll and the damage roll. In addition, you replace *infernal wrath* with *paladin's wrath*.

Paladin's Wrath — Tiefling Racial Power

You stand against your foes, unleashing a howling battle cry that seems to howl from the depths of Hell.

Encounter ✦ Divine
Minor Action **Close** burst 5
Target: Each enemy in burst
Effect: The target is subject to your divine sanction until the end of your next turn.

Divine Sanction

Some paladin powers and some new feats subject a target to your divine sanction (as introduced in *Divine Power*). Being subject to it means the target is marked by you for a duration specified in the description of the power or feat. Unless otherwise noted, the mark ends before the specified duration if someone else marks the target.

Until the mark ends, the target takes radiant damage equal to 3 + your Charisma modifier the first time each round it makes an attack that doesn't include you as a target. The damage increases to 6 + your Charisma modifier at 11th level and 9 + your Charisma modifier at 21st level.

Divine sanction is meant to complement divine challenge. You can use divine challenge to mark one creature and use divine sanction to mark others. Divine sanction has fewer restrictions than divine challenge so that you can easily use the two in concert.

Blood Crowned Courtier

Several noble houses among the tieflings of Bael Turath include devils, usually satraps and advisors dispatched to the world by Asmodeus, in their family trees. The descendant of a devil received special consideration in all areas of Bael Turath society, because the mingling of tiefling and diabolic blood created prodigies skilled in warfighting, arcane spells, and divine magic. With their augmented diabolic nature, these tieflings commanded terrifying powers against their enemies, both inside and outside the empire.

Such a prodigy was referred to as a blood crowned courtier, indicating the inherent privilege he or she received. Even a tiefling from an otherwise humble or cast-out lineage could advance far if he or she displayed the powers reserved for those whose family tree extended to Hell. The feats described below were common marks of such favored tieflings.

Heroic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of any level who meets the prerequisites.

Diabolic Soul

Prerequisite: Tiefling

Benefit: Whenever you take a critical hit, you gain a +2 feat bonus to attack rolls against that enemy until the end of the encounter. In addition, you replace *infernal wrath* with *diabolic transformation*.

Diabolic Transformation Tiefling Racial

You roar with fury as the hellish blood that flows through your veins reveals its true power. In the blink of an eye, you transform into a brutish fiend.

Daily ✦ Polymorph
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: You transform into a diabolic brute until the end of the encounter. While you are in this form, you gain regeneration 2, you increase fire resistance by 5, you gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls, and the bonus to attack rolls granted by your Bloodhunt racial trait increases to +2.
11th level: Regeneration 4.
21st level: Regeneration 6.
Special: Once during this encounter while you are in this form, you can use the black wrath of hell power.

Black Wrath of Hell Tiefling Racial Power

You burn through the very essence of your own soul to lend terrifying power to your attack.

Encounter
Free Action **Personal**
Trigger: You hit an enemy with an attack.
Effect: The attack deals 1d10 extra damage and the target takes a penalty to attack rolls against you equal to the higher of your Intelligence or Charisma modifier (save ends). The bonus damage increases to 2d10 at 11th level and 3d10 at 21st level.

Furious Demand

Prerequisite: 2nd level, tiefling

Benefit: You gain the *furious demand* feat power, which replaces a utility power of 2nd level or higher.

In addition, you gain a +2 feat bonus to Intimidate checks.

Furious Demand Feat Power

Your soul burns with anger, causing your foe to quail in fear at the expression on your face.

Daily
Free Action **Personal**
Trigger: You succeed on an Intimidate check or hit with an attack
Target: The creature you intimidated or hit
Effect: You gain a +2 bonus to all Intimidate checks until the end of the encounter. In addition, the target takes a penalty to attack rolls against you equal to your Charisma modifier (save ends).
Aftereffect: The target takes a penalty to attack rolls against you equal to your Charisma modifier until the end of its next turn.

Hellish Defiance

Prerequisite: Tiefling, *infernal wrath* racial power

Benefit: When you use *infernal wrath*, the target provokes opportunity attacks from your allies when it attacks you until the end of its next turn.

Imperious Majesty

Prerequisite: Tiefling

Benefit: You can use Charisma instead of Dexterity to determine your initiative modifier. When you hit a creature that has not yet acted in an encounter with an attack, it takes a penalty to attack rolls against you equal to your Charisma modifier until the end of your next turn.

The Black Academy

When Bael Turath forged its pact with Asmodeus, its arcane academies received the services of several powerful devils to teach students how best to twist and weave the magic of fire and fear. The Black Academy was the most prestigious of these schools. Its graduates were feared through the world for their potent spells.

Hellfire Arcanist

Prerequisite: Tiefling, wizard

Benefit: You gain a +2 feat bonus to damage rolls with fire attacks. If you push, pull, or slide a creature with a fear attack, increase that forced movement by 2 squares.

The bonus increases to +3 at 11th level and +4 at 21st level.

Hellfire Master

Prerequisite: Tiefling, wizard

Benefit: When an enemy saves against an effect bestowed by your fire attack, it takes fire damage equal to 5 + your Charisma modifier.

Hellfire Terror Lord

Prerequisite: Tiefling, wizard

Benefit: When an enemy saves against an effect bestowed by your fear attack, it falls prone.

Wizard's Wrath

Prerequisite: Tiefling, wizard

Benefit: You ignore bloodied enemies' fire resistance and fire immunity. In addition, you replace *infernal wrath* with *wizard's wrath*.

Wizard's Wrath — Tiefling Racial Power

You funnel your anger into your magic, spawning a roaring vortex of raw power that batters your enemies, ruining their mundane and magical defenses.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Zone
Minor Action **Area** burst 1 within 10

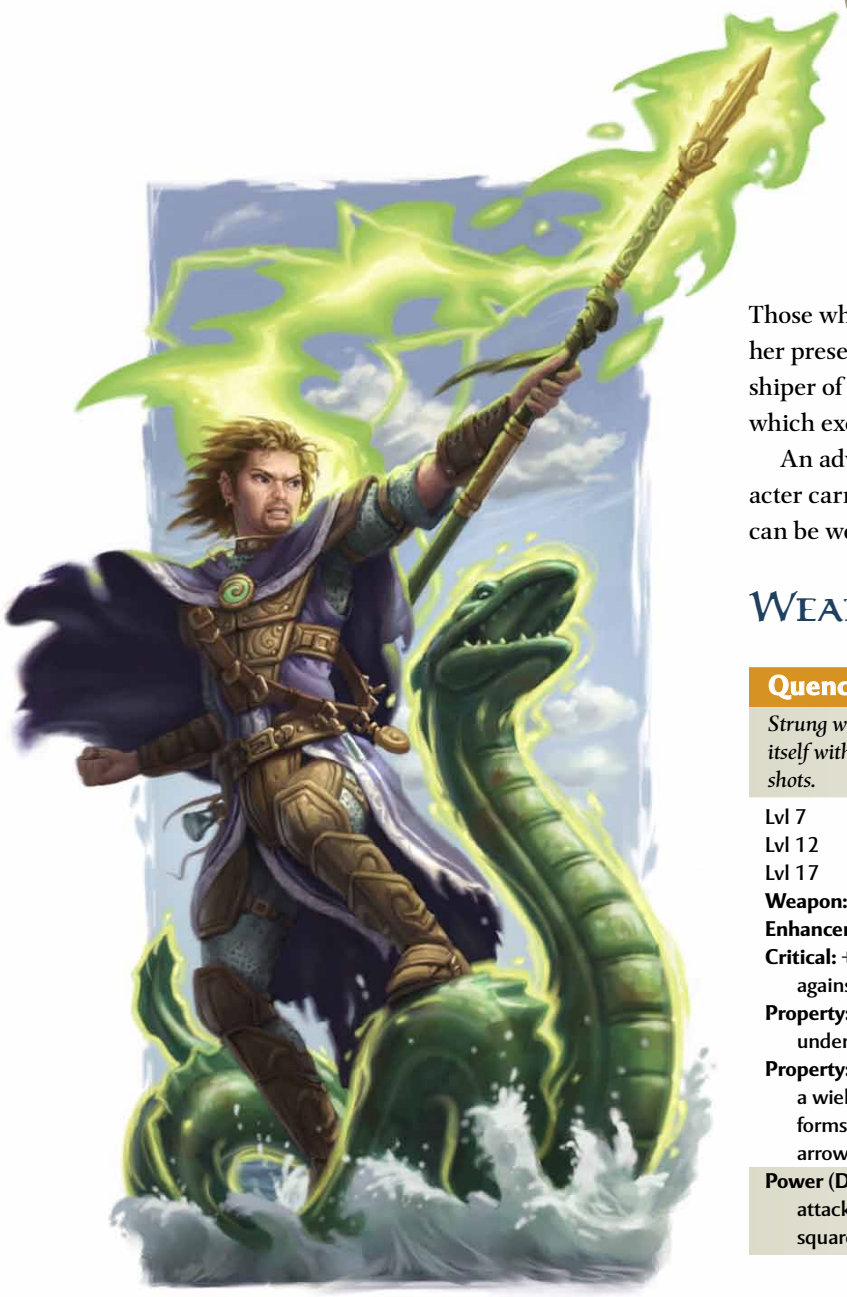
Effect: The burst becomes a zone of arcane energy that lasts until the end of your next turn. You gain combat advantage against targets in the zone, and they lose all immunities and resistances against your attacks.

About the Author

Mike Mearls is the Lead Designer for the Dungeons & Dragons® roleplaying game. His recent credits include *H1: Keep on the Shadowfell*™ and *Player's Handbook*® 2.

Channel Divinity: Melora

By Matthew Sernett
Illustrations by Mike Sass



Those who listen for it can hear Melora's influence in the lilt of birdsong and the gurgle of a brook. One can feel her presence when mountains quake, and when the tide draws the sea back into itself or hurls it ashore. A worshiper of Melora might honor her as a mother to life, propitiate her deadly nature, or pay homage to her beasts, which exemplify the natural struggle between the forces of creation and destruction.

An adventurer who worships Melora or seeks her favor can show devotion through the equipment the character carries. The items below share the theme of water, either for its life-giving aspect or its deadly nature, and can be welcome aids to many of Melora's faithful.

Weapons

Quenchquiver Weapon **Level 7+**

Strung with a flowing filament of water, this weapon arms itself with arrows of fluid that can bowl over foes with soaking shots.

Lvl 7	+2	2,600 gp	Lvl 22	+5	325,000 gp
Lvl 12	+3	13,000 gp	Lvl 27	+6	1,625,000 gp
Lvl 17	+4	65,000 gp			

Weapon: Bow, Crossbow
Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls
Critical: +1d6 damage per plus, or +1d10 damage per plus against fire creatures
Property: You take no attack penalty when using this weapon underwater.
Property: This weapon does not require ammunition, although a wielder can use an arrow or bolt if desired. The wielder forms an arrow or bolt of water by drawing the string. An arrow or bolt not used evaporates.
Power (Daily): Free Action. *Trigger:* You hit with a ranged attack using this weapon. *Effect:* The target is pushed 2 squares and falls prone.

Whirlpool Weapon **Level 15+**

This weapon trails splashing water after it as you swing it, and when you whirl it about, it creates a whirlpool to draw foes into its reach.

Lvl 15	+2	25,000 gp	Lvl 25	+5	625,000 gp
Lvl 20	+3	125,000gp	Lvl 30	+6	3,125,000 gp

Weapon: Any melee
Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls
Critical: +1d6 damage per plus
Property: You take no attack penalty when using this weapon underwater.
Power (Daily): Minor Action. *Effect:* You whirl your weapon about to send spectral water spinning around you in a ghostly vortex. Make an attack: Close burst 3; targets enemies; Strength +4 vs. Fortitude (apply a bonus to the attack roll equal to the weapon's enhancement bonus); on a hit, the target is pulled 3 squares and immobilized until the end of your next turn.
Level 25: Strength +6 vs. Fortitude.

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Consumable

Flamebane Bomb — Level 3+

This crystal cylinder of blue liquid quells flame when it explodes against a surface.

Lvl 3	30 gp	Lvl 18	3,400 gp
Lvl 8	125 gp	Lvl 23	17,000 gp
Lvl 13	650 gp	Lvl 28	85,000 gp

Alchemical Item

Power (Consumable): Standard Action. *Effect:* Blue liquid spreads in an area burst 1 within 10 and causes the following effects:

- Creatures in the area that are taking ongoing fire damage can make a saving throw with a +2 bonus against the effect.
- Natural fires in the area are extinguished.
- You make an attack against any creature with a fire aura in the area: +6 vs. Reflex; on a hit, the target's fire aura is deactivated and can't be reactivated until the end of the targets next turn.
- You make an attack against any fire zone in the area: +6 vs. the Reflex of the creator of the zone; on a hit, the zone is destroyed, and its effect ends, including any effect that normally lasts until a target saves.
- At higher level, each of this item's attacks increases in bonus as follows.

  Level 8: +11 vs. Reflex
  Level 13: +16 vs. Reflex
  Level 18: +21 vs. Reflex
  Level 23: +26 vs. Reflex
  Level 28: +31 vs. Reflex

Feet Slot Item

Surfsurge Shoes — Level 8

These supple shoes can send their wearer soaring above foes on a surge of water.

Item Slot: Feet 3,400 gp

Power (Encounter): Immediate Reaction. *Trigger:* You are subject to a push, pull, or slide effect. *Effect:* You slide 1 square.

Power (Daily): Move Action. *Effect:* A wave of rushing water rises beneath your feet and carries you where you want. You move your speed, moving vertically if you wish. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks. If you do not end your move on a solid surface, you fall.

Holy Symbol

Symbol of the Deep — Level 9

This small holy symbol sways in your grip, and when its power is used, it surrounds a foe in a column of swirling water.

Lvl 9	+2	4,200 gp	Lvl 24	+5	525,000 gp
Lvl 14	+3	21,000 gp	Lvl 29	+6	2,625,000 gp
Lvl 19	+4	105,000 gp			

Implement (Holy Symbol)

Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d6 damage per plus

Power (Daily): Free Action. *Trigger:* You hit with an attack using this holy symbol. *Effect:* The target is immobilized, cannot make opportunity attacks, and takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends).

Wondrous Items

Battle Standard of the Tides — Level 16

This blue flag ripples in a wind of its own, as ghostly water fountains whirl protectively around you and your allies.

Wondrous Item 45,000 gp

Power (Encounter ✦ Zone): Standard Action. *Effect:* When you plant the battle standard in your space or in a square adjacent to you, it creates a zone of wind and tides in a close burst 3. Enemies treat the zone as difficult terrain, and when a nonaquatic enemy ends its turn in the zone, it is pushed 3 squares from the standard's square.

The zone lasts until the end of the encounter or until the battle standard is removed from the ground. Any character in or adjacent to the battle standard's square can remove it from the ground of as a standard action.

Jade Sea Snake — Level 10

This coiled serpent of jade can become a mount for several riders and carry them on land and sea.

Wondrous Item 5,000 gp

Power (Daily ✦ Conjuration): Standard Action. You use this figurine to conjure a Huge sea snake (see below for statistics). As a free action, you can spend a healing surge when activating this item to give the creature temporary hit points equal to your healing surge value.

While riding the jade sea snake, you breathe underwater as if it were air and can speak normally under water. The sea snake can carry six Medium or Small characters. If more or larger characters are placed on it, the creature disappears and cannot be conjured again until after an extended rest.

See *Adventurer's Vault*, page 180, for complete details on *figurines of wondrous power*.

Jade Sea Snake
Huge natural animate (aquatic, mount)

Initiative as conjurer **Senses** Perception +12, low-light vision
HP 15; **Bloodied** 7
AC 20; **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 20, **Will** 16
Speed 6, swim 10

⊕ **Bite** (standard; at-will) ✦ **Poison**
+13 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 poison damage.

Deft Slither (while mounted by a friendly rider of 10th level or higher) ✦ **Mount**
While swimming, the sea snake and its riders do not provoke opportunity attacks due to their movement.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** –

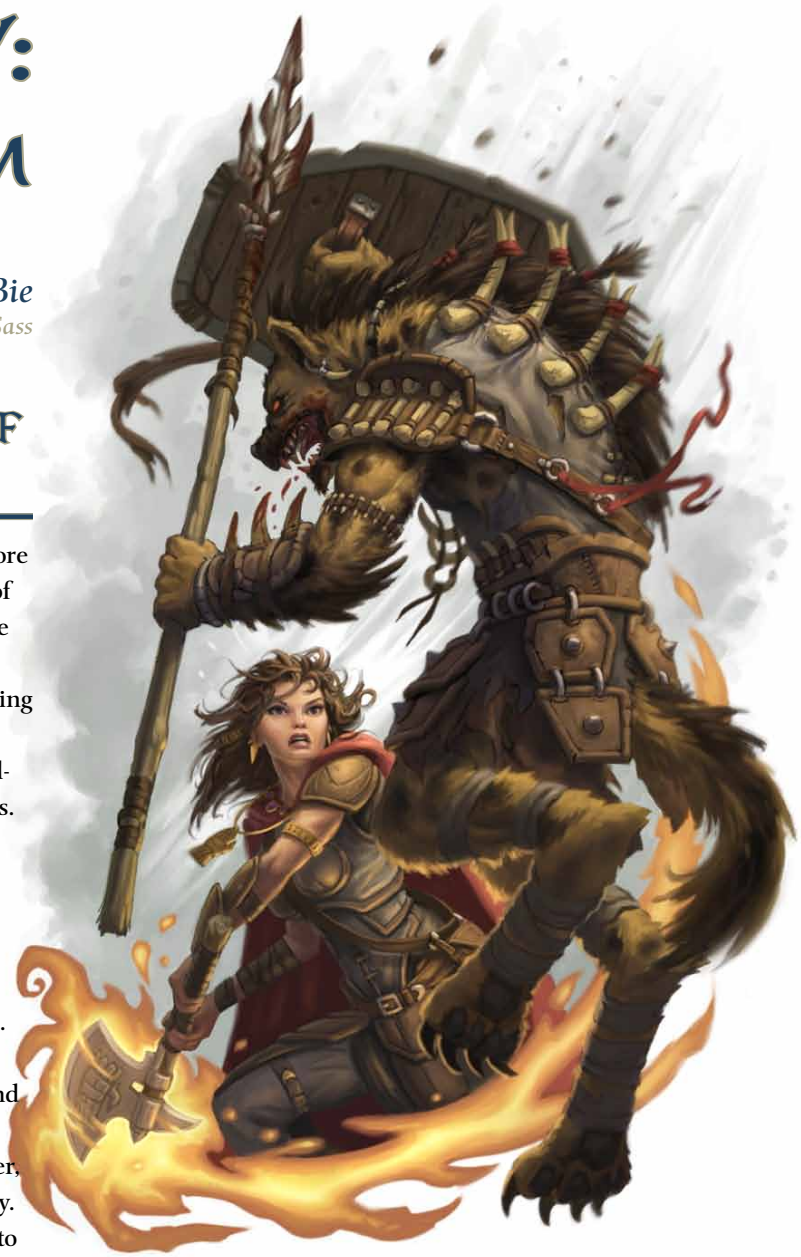
Str 22 (+10)	**Dex** 16 (+7)	**Wis** 17 (+7)
Con 16 (+7)	**Int** 2 (+0)	**Cha** 10 (+4)

About the Author

Matthew Sernett is a writer and game designer for Wizards of the Coast who splits his time between Dungeons & Dragons® and **Magic: The Gathering**®. Recent credits include *Monster Manual® 2* and *Player's Handbook® 2*.

Channel Divinity: Champions of Torm

By Eytan Bernstein and Erik Scott de Bie
Illustrations by Mike Sass



"As a sword has two edges, so does the law have two sides—see, understand, and judge fairly."

—Kel Moorwalker,
Lord of Everlund, Paladin of Torm
"On Law and Justice," published 1476

"Eternal vigilance—justice at any cost."

—Sworn oath of the Eye of Justice,
est. Westgate 1384

The trumpet sounds, and battle is joined against a cruel warlord. A devious tyrant schemes to manipulate the law to his own gain. Hardened criminals prey upon the innocent, whether on isolated farmsteads of in the maze of twisted alleys.

But wherever villainy triumphs and injustice reigns, the servants of Torm bring truth and light to the darkest shadows. The divine servants of the Loyal Fury will not rest until they defeat the countless evils that beset the good folk of the Realms.

The Waxing Power of Law and Justice

In the old world, Torm was a lesser power—little more than a great hero raised to deific status as the god of paladins and holy knights. He was servant—a squire of sorts—to the extant god of justice, Tyr.

Godhood served Torm well, and vice versa. During the Time of Troubles, he distinguished himself by sacrificing his own life, and those of many of his followers, in combat with Bane over the city of Tantras. Torm was revived in honor after the conflict, more powerful than ever, and his selfless actions earned him widespread acclaim.

In 1384, Cyric's dark manipulations influenced Tyr to battle Helm, god of guardians, who was an ally to Torm and Tyr both. Tyr won, and Helm died. Crushed by grief and shame, Tyr bequeathed his divine power to Torm, his loyal servant and heir, and soon after fell in battle with terrible fiends of the Abyss. Torm mourned his friend and spiritual father, vowing to follow Tyr's example and honor his legacy.

Torm is a humble deity, encouraging his priests to remember that they wear the heavy mantle of history.

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Divine Allies and Foes

Before the Spellplague, Torm, Tyr, and Ilmater formed a "triad" of benevolent deities. This covenant has been renewed in the wake of Tyr's death, with Torm, Ilmater, and Bahamut, who was promoted to occupy much the same knightly place Torm did for Tyr.

While Torm is technically the god of law while Bahamut is charged with justice, a considerable amount of overlap exists between the deities, and Torm is known widely as a god of justice in addition to cold law. Torm and his priests err on the side of benevolence when determining lawful matters. The gods of the Triad make a perfect set of judges: Bahamut's desire for justice balanced by Ilmater's mercy, with Torm as the calm center.

Torm also allies himself to the similarly aligned Amaunator. In the old world, Amaunator was known as Lathander, and he was young and vibrant despite being centuries old. Stoic Torm disapproved but envied Lathander in many ways, but when the Morninglord became the god of the sun, his youthful luster was tempered with a gravitas that Torm respected. Also, they both inherited heavy burdens in the brave new world and thought alliance a better course than rivalry. The two have become strong allies, and many of Torm's granted powers reflect this connection by tapping into Amaunator's radiance.

Torm is a constant, steady foe of the dark gods of the Realms, in particular Bane and Shar. He holds especial enmity for Cyric, whom he sees as the cause of his divine "father" Tyr's downfall.

Playing a Champion of Order

Torm is one of the brightest divine figures in the Realms, and his priests are known for their valor and self-sacrifice. Should you choose the path of the champion of justice, walk tall and proud, carrying the weight of history and nobility in all that you do.

As exemplified by Torm's fabled romance with Sune, knights of Torm are as courtly as they are noble. You respect and admire loveliness in all its forms, and you protect those more delicate than you are.

Be warned, though, that darkness brews at the heart of some of Torm's faithful. Potential for corruption skulks in the noblest of hearts, and dark forces work from within as well as without. Rumors abound of corrupt priests at all levels of the temple hierarchy. Rely upon your faith in Torm and the light of order will aid you against such challenges.

Champion of Order Feats

Some adherents of Torm learn the Channel Divinity feat, Torm's Justice (see the *Forgotten Realms® Players Guide*), and below are a number of feats favored by followers of Torm across the Realms. Some particularly devout followers learn to manifest the *light of justice* (see sidebar).

Heroic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of any level who meets the prerequisites.

Bloody Balance

Prerequisite: Paladin

Benefit: While you are adjacent to a bloodied ally, you gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls.

Light of Order

Prerequisite: Any divine class

Benefit: You gain the *shining light of order* at-will power.

You can swap one 2nd-level or higher utility power for the *punitive radiance* power.

Shining Light of Order — Feat Utility Power

Your righteousness shines forth to light your way.

At-Will ✦ Divine, Radiant
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: You shed bright light out to 4 squares until you end this power as a free action.

Punitive Radiance — Feat Utility Power

The punishment you levy on the unrighteous is visible from miles away.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Radiant
Free Action
Trigger: You hit an enemy with an attack
Target: The triggering enemy
Effect: The target takes 1d6 extra radiant damage. Additionally, the target grants combat advantage and cannot benefit from invisibility until the end of your next turn.
Level 11: 2d6 radiant damage.
Level 21: 3d6 radiant damage.

Light of Order

This rare set of powers originated with Gedrin Shadowbane, a former thief turned paladin who founded the Eye of Justice out of the ruins of the Night Mask guild in Westgate (see Organizations). For many years, the talent remained unique to him, but the ability has spread among many followers of Torm.

Paragon Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of 11th level or higher who meets the prerequisites.

Chosen Defender

Prerequisite: 11th level, paladin

Benefit: Enemies adjacent to you take a –2 penalty to attack rolls on opportunity attacks against your allies.

Eye of Judgment

Prerequisite: 11th level, any divine class

Benefit: Whenever you make an Insight check, roll twice and use either result.

Justice Hammer

Prerequisite: 11th level, any divine class

Benefit: If you score a critical hit with a divine at-will attack power, the target is dazed until the end of its next turn.

Warding Shield

Prerequisite: 11th level, paladin or cleric, proficiency with light or heavy shields

Benefit: When you are using a shield, allies adjacent to you gain a +2 shield bonus to Reflex.

Epic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of 21st level or higher who meets the prerequisites.

All-Seeing Eye of the Guardian

Prerequisite: 21st level, paladin

Benefit: Allies adjacent to you do not grant combat advantage due to being flanked.

Just Sacrifice

Prerequisite: 21st level, paladin

Benefit: If an ally adjacent to you has 0 healing surges, that ally can spend your healing surges as though they were his or her own.

Torm's Radiance

Prerequisite: 21st level, any divine class

Benefit: Your divine encounter and daily powers ignore radiant resistance and immunity.

Organizations

The temple of Torm is a popular, far-reaching one, mercifully free of the stigma attached to the priesthoods of previous gods. For instance, Helm's reputation was stained by the actions of zealous missionaries who conquered frontier lands in his name. Many branches of Torm's temple exist in the Realms, and each one varies in outlook and uses slightly different holy symbols.

The Evenhands of Everlund

An upstanding order of knights based in Luruar protects the civilized lands of the north. Commanded by the Lord of Everlund, Kel Moorwalker, the order strives to emulate and honor Tyr, the fallen god of justice, who was Torm's predecessor and the deity he is said to have most admired.

Symbol: A gauntlet, palm forward, with the scales of justice emblazoned in the palm. Sometimes, the gauntlet is set against the silver tower of Everlund

Suggested Classes: Cleric, fighter, paladin

Eye of Justice

A haven for the harshest practitioners of the faith, who do not flinch from achieving their desired end by whatever means, the Eye of Justice is a heretical off-shoot of the worship of Torm, and it walks the fine line between justice and vengeance. Its members know no pity or fear, and they freely use questionable tactics in the name of the greater good. They worship a version of Torm sometimes called the Threefold God (an amalgam of Torm along with the dead gods Tyr and Helm). Based in Westgate, the Eye attracts members who have been cast out of other holy orders, or who seek to redeem themselves for a villainous past. Few hotter crucibles exist for proving oneself than the mean streets of Westgate.

Symbol: The gauntlet of Torm, palm down, with a runic eye in the center

Suggested Classes: Avenger, paladin, rogue

Girded Healers

An order of knights sworn to both Torm and Ilmater, these divine servants favor the healing powers of the divine and work to ease the suffering caused by the

Realms' evils. Girded Healers operate throughout the Realms, but particularly in those lands worst ravaged by war and magical catastrophe.

Symbol: An open gauntlet, fingers spread, loosely wrapped in white linens around the wrist

Suggested Classes: Cleric, warlord, monk

TOOLS OF LAW

The following items are favorites of followers of Torm everywhere.

Ring of Uncanny Judgment — Level 13

This ring resembles the scales of justice bent in a circle, and it broadens your judgment of your surroundings.

Item Slot: Ring 17,000 gp
Property: You gain a +2 item bonus to Insight checks.
Property: When you mark an enemy, you automatically know the distance and direction to that enemy at all times while the mark persists.

Rod of Divine Retribution — Level 9+

This rod, adorned with Torm's gauntlets at either end, separates the pure from the corrupt.

Lvl 9	+2	4,200 gp	Lvl 24	+5	525,000 gp
Lvl 14	+3	21,000 gp	Lvl 29	+6	2,625,000 gp
Lvl 19	+4	105,000 gp			

Implement (Rod)
Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls
Critical: +1d6 radiant damage per plus
Property: You gain a +1 item bonus to attack rolls using this implement against a target that hit you since the end of your last turn.
Level 14 or 19: +2 item bonus to attack rolls.
Level 24 or 29: +3 item bonus to attack rolls.
Power (Daily): Free Action. *Trigger:* You hit a target that has attacked you since the end of your last turn. *Effect:* The target is stunned until the end of your next turn.

EYE OF JUSTICE

Ask your DM for more information on the Eye of Justice order, details of which are presented in *Dungeon*® 171.

Vigilant Blade — Level 4+

Set with the symbol of an upright gauntlet with an unblinking eye in its palm, this blade bursts into burning white light in the hands of one sworn to bring justice to the wicked.

Lvl 4	+1	840 gp	Lvl 19	+4	105,000 gp
Lvl 9	+2	4,200 gp	Lvl 24	+5	525,000 gp
Lvl 14	+3	21,000 gp	Lvl 29	+6	2,625,000 gp

Weapon: Heavy blade, light blade
Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls
Critical: +1d8 fire and radiant damage per plus
Property: Paladins and avengers can use this weapon as an implement for paladin or avenger powers and paladin or avenger paragon path powers.
Power (At-Will): Minor Action. The weapon casts bright light out to 4 squares until you end this effect as a minor action.
Power (Encounter): Immediate Reaction. *Trigger:* You use this power when an ally adjacent to you is attacked by an enemy adjacent to you. *Effect:* You switch places with the ally, and the target grants combat advantage to you until the end of your next turn.

VIGILANT BLADES

These swords are patterned after the sword Vindicator, a bastard sword wielded by the famous paladin Gedrin Shadowbane, a cutpurse become paladin. The sword first appeared to young Gedrin as part of a dream, in which it was wielded by the dying god Helm, and it symbolizes valor to the end. Gedrin wielded it on quests all over Faerûn, and it vanquished many foes. In his hands—and in the hands of any paladin—it glowed with a fearsome holy radiance. With its power, Gedrin fought well into extreme old age, carrying on his crusade past his ninetieth winter.

Gedrin vanished in 1463 while operating on the Sword Coast, and the blade vanished for a time, its whereabouts unknown. A few years later, it reappeared in the hands of a spellscarred beggar boy from Luskan who called himself Shadowbane, after his spiritual predecessor. The Order took this reappearance of the blade as a sign of Gedrin's ongoing faith and honor and trained Shadowbane in the ways of the Eye. Quickly, though, he forsook what he saw as a corrupt, decadent organization and struck out on his own, taking Vindicator with him. Agents of the Eye of Justice have been searching for him for years.

Vigilant blades bear a variety of holy symbols, but they feature the gauntlet of Torm or a similar gauntlet with an eye in the palm in honor of the dead god of guardians, Helm.

About the Authors

Erik Scott de Bie lives in the Seattle area with his wife, two cats, and far too much gamer stuff. He writes technical documentation by day, fights injustice by night, and gives the rest of his time to fiction, gaming, and his lovely lady (not necessarily in that order). He is the author of several Forgotten Realms® novels, including *Ghostwalker*, *Depths of Madness*, and his most recent release, *Downshadow*.

Eytan Bernstein hails from New York City. He spends his days writing and editing history books for a major educational publisher. By night, he works as a game designer, editor, and developer. His previous credits for Wizards of the Coast include *Adventurer's Vault*™, *Open Grave*™*: Secrets of the Undead*, and *Arcane Power*™.

Know Your Role: Defenders

By Matthew Sernett
Illustrations by Alex Aparin

A great defender ties up most—if not all—of the enemies in melee, freeing strikers to maneuver and allowing controllers and leaders to attack or aid from afar. Of course, if your defender wants to do the job well, the character needs high defenses and the ability to swiftly regain hit points when attacks hit.

These needs can make it difficult to equip a defender. Sometimes the right magic item isn't available. Perhaps your paladin uses a greatsword and you don't want to switch weapons to make the occasional ranged attack. Maybe your fighter ends nearly every fight with few hit points but plenty of healing surges. Your swordmage might move around a lot and need more ways to bring enemies into melee. The items in this article aim to address some of those gaps. Hopefully you can find one or two your defender can't do without.

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Weapons

Fey Strike Weapon — Level 5+

Even distant foes must fear a blow from a warrior with this gleaming weapon in hand.

Lvl 5	+1	1,000 gp	Lvl 20	+4	125,000 gp
Lvl 10	+2	5,000 gp	Lvl 25	+5	625,000 gp
Lvl 15	+3	25,000 gp	Lvl 30	+6	3,125,000 gp

Weapon: Any melee
Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls
Critical: +1d6 damage per plus
Power (Encounter): Standard Action. *Effect:* The weapon discharges a shimmering mirror of itself that flies toward your enemy. You make a melee basic attack as a ranged 20 attack with this weapon.
Power (Daily ✦ Teleportation): Free Action. *Trigger:* You hit an enemy with an attack using this weapon. *Effect:* Teleport the target 10 squares to a space adjacent to you.

Foe Maker Weapon — Level 3+

No enemy can look upon this foul weapon and not hate both it and its wielder.

Lvl 3	+1	680 gp	Lvl 18	+4	85,000 gp
Lvl 8	+2	3,400 gp	Lvl 23	+5	425,000 gp
Lvl 13	+3	17,000 gp	Lvl 28	+6	2,125,000 gp

Weapon: Any melee
Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls
Critical: +1d6 damage per plus, or +1d10 per plus against a target marked by you
Power (Daily): Standard Action. Each enemy within 5 squares that you can see is marked until the end of your next turn.

Arms Slot Items

Crowd Killer Shield — Level 14

Your foes might think they have the upper hand, but this shield ensures you fight on a level field.

Item Slot: Arms 21,000 gp
Shield: Any
Property: Any enemy who flanks you grants combat advantage to you.

Foe Fending Shield — Level 6+

This shield can fend off an attack against an ally while it inflames your enemy's ire.

Lvl 6	1,800 gp	Lvl 26	1,125,000 gp
Lvl 16	45,000 gp		

Item Slot: Arms
Shield: Any
Power (Daily): Immediate Interrupt. *Trigger:* An attack that targets AC or Reflex hits an ally adjacent to you. *Effect:* The triggering attacker is marked (save ends). If the attacker is already marked by you or an ally, the attacker instead takes a -2 penalty to the attack.
Level 16: The triggering attack hits an ally within 3 squares.
Level 26: The triggering attack hits an ally within 5 squares.

Feet Slot Items

Boots of the Mighty Charge — Level 10

Your footsteps thunder as you charge in these boots, making bounds of steps and allowing you to deliver a mighty blow.

Item Slot: Feet 5,000 gp
Property: When charging, you gain a +2 item bonus to speed.
Power (Daily): Free Action. *Trigger:* Use this power when you charge. *Effect:* You can use any at-will or encounter melee or close weapon attack power at the end of the charge as long as it is an attack that includes the enemy you are charging. (You are not restricted to making a melee basic attack or a bull rush.)

Foe Chaser Boots — Level 6

Those you've chosen to fight find escape less likely when you wear these boots.

Item Slot: Feet 1,800 gp
Property: When charging an enemy marked by you, you gain a +2 item bonus to speed.
Power (Daily ✦ Teleportation): Immediate Reaction. *Trigger:* An enemy marked by you makes an attack that does not include you. *Effect:* You teleport to a space adjacent to the marked enemy.

Swiftstrike Shoes — Level 20

More supple shoes never touched the foot of a hero, and in these shoes a hero's feet sometimes barely touch the ground.

Item Slot: Feet 125,000 gp
Property: You gain a +5 bonus to speed until the end of your first turn each encounter.
Power (Daily ✦ Teleportation): Move Action. You teleport 20 squares to a space adjacent to any enemy within your line of sight.

Hands Slot Items

Foe Caller Gauntlets — Level 22

No enemy can escape your challenge when you point the foe out while wearing these gauntlets.

Item Slot: Hands 325,000 gp
Power (Encounter ✦ Teleportation): Immediate Interrupt. *Trigger:* An enemy marked by you makes an attack that does not include you. *Effect:* You teleport the enemy 10 squares to a space adjacent to you and make a melee basic attack against that enemy.

Head Slot Items

Vortex Mask — Level 12

This eerie mask has a mouth from which no light escapes, and it draws foes toward that darkness in a great inhalation.

Item Slot: Head 13,000 gp

Power (Daily): Minor Action. You pull an enemy within 5 squares of you 2 squares (no attack roll). If you have the enemy marked, you pull the enemy 4 squares.

Neck Slot Items

Amulet of Life — Level 5+

Crafted in orum, and in the shape of a stylized sun, this amulet flairs with amber light whenever it's used.

Lvl 5	+1	1,000 gp	Lvl 20	+4	125,000 gp
Lvl 10	+2	5,000 gp	Lvl 25	+5	625,000 gp
Lvl 15	+3	25,000 gp	Lvl 30	+6	3,125,000 gp

Item Slot: Neck

Enhancement: Fortitude, Reflex, and Will

Power (Encounter ✦ Healing): Free Action. *Trigger:* Use this power when you spend a healing surge. *Effect:* You can spend an additional healing surge.

Rings

Foe Binder Ring — Level 19

This hefty iron ring earns you greater enmity from all whom you challenge. Such a burden falls heavy on all but the stoutest heart.

Item Slot: Ring 105,000 gp

Property: When you mark an enemy, the enemy takes the -2 penalty to attack rolls against other creatures even when you are included in the attack.

Power (Daily): Minor Action. Until the end of the encounter, any enemy you mark takes a -3 penalty to attack rolls that don't target you instead of the normal -2 penalty. If you've reached at least one milestone today, this effect lasts until you take an extended rest instead.

Waist Slot Items

Belt of the Flanker's Bane — Level 6

When wearing this belt, a subtle shift of your weight is all you need to send a flanking enemy scrambling.

Item Slot: Waist 1,800 gp

Power (Encounter): Immediate Interrupt. *Trigger:* When a flanking enemy makes an attack roll against you. *Effect:* You slide the triggering enemy 2 squares to a square adjacent to you.

Wondrous Items

Battle Standard of the Hungry Blade — Level 9

This black pennant bears the symbol of the hungry blade: an axe head with a toothy maw that resembles the silhouette of a dragon's head.

Wondrous Item 4,200 gp

Power (Encounter ✦ Zone): Standard Action. When you plant this battle standard in your space or an adjacent square, it creates a zone in a close burst 3. Enemies within the zone when it is created or within the zone at the start of your turn are pulled 2 squares toward the battle standard and slowed until the start of your next turn.

The zone lasts until the end of the encounter or until the battle standard is removed from the ground. Any character in or adjacent to the battle standard's square can remove it from the ground as a standard action. If an enemy attempts to remove the standard, it provokes opportunity attacks from you and your allies.

Diplomat's Scabbard — Level 12

Sometimes diplomacy requires swordplay.

Wondrous Item 13,000 gp

Property: While a weapon is sheathed in this item and you are not wielding a weapon or an implement, you gain a +2 item bonus to Diplomacy checks.

Property: This scabbard resizes to fit any light blade or heavy blade. You can draw a weapon from this scabbard as part of the same action used to make an attack with that weapon.

Power (Daily): Immediate Interrupt. *Trigger:* An enemy hits you with an attack and you have not yet made an attack this encounter. *Effect:* The triggering enemy rerolls the attack roll with a -4 penalty and must use the second result.

About the Author

Matthew Sernett has been a pizza cook, an onion packer, and an assembly line worker in a spring factory—grueling work that was surprisingly good endurance training for being the editor-in-chief of *Dragon® Magazine*. After ceding that role to others with greater fortitude (keep it up, Chris!), he worked as a D&D® designer and helped to create 4th Edition. He now happily splits his professional time between D&D design and world-building for Magic: The Gathering®.

Guilds & Groups: The Honest Few

By Robert J. Schwalb
Illustrations by Frank Wall, Empty Room Studios

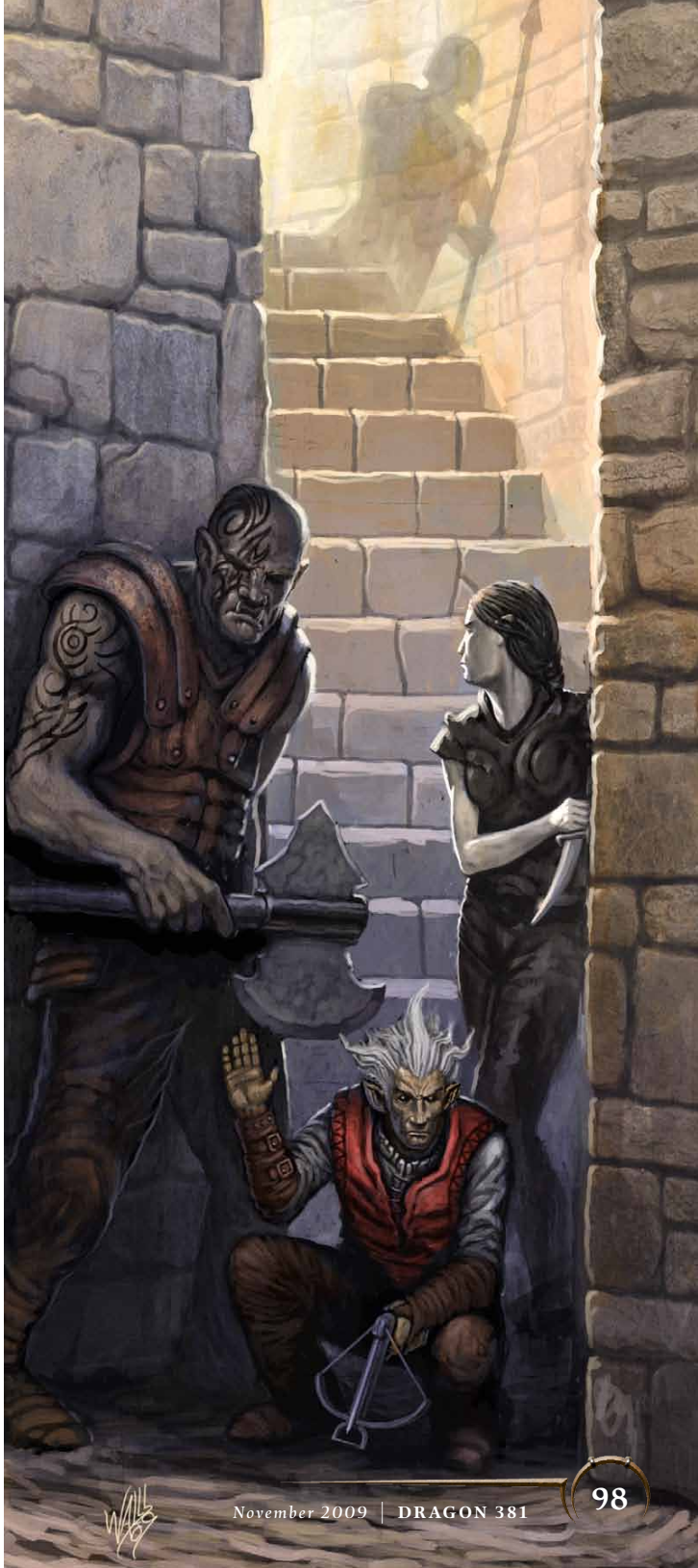
"Our name is eye-ROHN-ic. See, we ain't honest and we ain't few. Shep sez itsa player on words. Now. Give me that purse or I'll cutcha like a halfling."

Criminal elements are like kobolds. You kill a bunch, and they keep coming back. No matter where you go, you're bound to find a few pickpockets working the marketplace or toothless chap leaning against an alley wall, picking black nails with a knife. Few vaults are secure enough to dissuade a second-story man from slipping through a window to bust the safe, and that nice fellow down by the docks? If you follow his directions, you will be in dire straits, nursing a sore head and wondering how your nose broke and why your purse is missing. Thieves are everywhere, in every town, every city, haunting the docks and slums, noble quarters and temple districts all. Thieves can be grubby beggars smelling of sour cheese or pampered fops dressed in the latest fashions. A thieves' eye passes over a suspicious face or a humble man whose parsimonious appearance protects his wealth, but seems drawn to those few who can't help but display their good fortune.

The Honest Few is a small gang operating out of Fallcrest in the Nentir Vale. A new group, they don't quite have the numbers or influence to call themselves a thieves' guild per se, but with the right kind of leadership, they might rise above their meager standing and become a syndicate worth fearing.

History

Fallcrest has always had its thieves, but they were a disorganized lot, with no loyalties or obligations to bind them to a common cause. Cutpurses competed on the Upper Quays. Ladies of the night vied for the same johns in the Lucky Rat. Gangs existed in the area, true, but they were small, tied to a boss, and followed their own rules. With so many factions jockeying for power, it should come to no surprise that the law eventually cracked down on them. It took only a murdered adventurer to call down the Lord Warden's wrath, and when it fell, the "honest" folk who escaped dug in deep just to stay alive.



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Orest Naerumar, the tiefling proprietor of the eponymous importer business, had connections to Fallcrest's underworld and he understood that too much law was bad for business. He depended on a steady supply of items and oddities to keep him in gold. He's a fence and was no stranger to the criminal life. He believed Fallcrest's pickers and swindlers needed organization and he knew just the man for the job.

The River Rats, a gang run by Kelson out of the Lucky Gnome Taphouse, ruled Lowtown through fear, but they weren't tough enough to survive the Lord Warden's people or their mission. With most of his boys swinging from ropes, Kelson's influence withered, but he still had a few contacts he could depend on to keep himself from joining his lads. Foremost of those contacts was the tiefling fence, Orest, whom he had had cause to do business with over the years.

Coming together, Orest convinced Kelson he had set his sights too low. As long as he was running a small operation in the slums, he'd never amount to anything let alone get rich. Orest proposed they form a new gang and spread their interests a bit further, looking into the wealthier corners, the quays, and the marketplaces. Between the two, they could round up a few cunning thieves and with the right incentives, they might recruit them to a new organization. Orest dealt straight with Kelson, who remarked that the tiefling was one of Fallcrest's honest few and that he would consider the proposal. Clearly, he agreed since the Honest Few have given Fallcrest's people new reason to guard their purses.

Are you Honest?

Where once pickpockets ran the streets in scores, now only a few remain and most are too frightened to venture much farther than the poor quarters in which they hide. Every other under-trade lacks representation as well. The Honest Few are looking for a few youngsters with an eye for a fat purse and the hands and wit to snatch it.

Backgrounds

Brains: In any elaborate criminal enterprise, there's someone behind it who comes up with the plans, gathers the intelligence, and organizes the job. As planners, these individuals are often intelligent, observant, and well-connected, but not all do this work because they want to get rich (though some do). What was your motive? Wealth, revenge, the mere challenge?

Associated Skills: Bluff, Streetwise

Burglar: You specialize in breaking and entering. No lock's going to stop you; no security can catch you. Why did you become a burglar? What treasures did you steal? Did you leave behind any calling cards? Did you ever find a safe too tough to crack? What was inside?

Associated Skills: Athletics, Thievery

Cutpurse: A bump and a stumble later, you're 30 silver pieces richer and the guard is suddenly poorer by the same number. You are a pickpocket by trade, and your deft hands pluck coins, jewelry, and whatever else you want without drawing the slightest attention. Who were your preferred marks? What were your signature moves? Did you have any close calls? Were you ever caught?

Associated Skills: Bluff, Thievery

Grifter: You swindle others out of their wealth through deception and misdirection. You might have been a small-time con artist, playing shell games on dirty street corners. Or you might have run the long con, setting up elaborate schemes to take the bigger prize. What was your best job? Your line of work creates many enemies. Who holds the worst grudge and what will they do to get even with you? Some grifters work with crews. If so, who were they and why are you not with them now? Or are you?

Associated Skills: Bluff, Insight

Muscle: The criminal's trade makes enemies as often as it makes money. To keep the law at bay and outraged marks from getting too close, swindlers and thieves keep muscle on hand for protection. Doing these things was your job. Most people who wind up as enforcers have few other appreciable talents. Was this your story? If not, what led to this work? How did you feel about strong-arming others?

Associated Skills: Athletics, Intimidate

REQUIREMENTS

Skills: Training in Bluff or Thievery

Minor Quest: The guild demands you undergo a test to prove your worth. You might have to steal a purse from a well-known merchant, break into a fortified house, or swindle an entrepreneur out of a considerable fortune.

Reading a Power: Level Swap

This entry tells you how a power changes if you swap a power of the indicated level or higher for it. You cannot have a power of the same name at two different levels.

Honest Few Benefits

The Honest Few know they can't keep talent unless they pay for it. By joining the syndicate, you gain connections, safehouses, and introductions to the right people.

Heroic Tier: Connections grant you a +2 bonus to Streetwise checks made in any community where the Honest Few have agents.

Paragon Tier: By the paragon tier, you're a ranking member, and you just might be running the show. As a result, the organization makes sure to take care of you. You never have to pay for room or board in any community where the Honest Few have a presence. In addition, the bonus to Streetwise checks increases to +4.

Being Honest

The Honest Few are criminals and as such, they engage in criminal enterprises. Pickpockets clip purses, muggers rob folk at dagger point, while swindlers take their coin from willing hands.

Advancement

The Honest Few offer many opportunities for advancement. They look for smarts, speed, and discretion. Those with these qualities and who show they can perform by funneling wealth into the organization can rise high, leading their own missions, setting up new "businesses" in other communities, or taking over the enterprise.

Missions

Most members are earners. They hit the streets and use their particular talents to keep the organization in coin. Each member must pay out a specific amount each week (as set by the DM, and it should be a number of silver pieces) and anything earned in excess the thief gets to keep.

Established members must still earn, but they take the harder missions for greater reward. Such missions might include stealing shipments, blackmailing the Lord Warden, or hitting fat caravans headed out from the community. These members don't have to earn a specific amount, but they have to pay in about half of what they take.

The guildmasters seldom involve themselves with actual missions. Instead, they manage the thieves in the field, doling out rewards and punishments, encouraging freelancers to leave, and keep the Honest Few in business. There can be only so many cooks in the kitchen, so to speak, so the Honest Few encourage rivals to branch out and expand the organization into larger communities, and leave these "franchises" to these members to run and manage as they like.

Thief

"You might call me a thief, but I prefer to see myself as a redistributor of your wealth."

Thieves are many things. They are bandits, cutpurses, burglars, swindlers, heroes, and villains. Their techniques run the gamut, but all arrive at their fortune by dishonest means. Some thieves are indiscriminate criminals, preying on anyone they can, but most place limits on their work, saving their talents for the people who most deserve their attention. There's little point in stealing rags from a beggar after all. Plus, a fat and decadent merchant who flaunts his wealth invites your subtle hand.

Thief Novice

Prerequisite: 4th level, trained in Thievery

Benefit: You can swap one 3rd-level or higher encounter attack power you know for the *stolen defenses* power.

Severed Defenses — Thief Attack 3

Your sly movements leave your opponent vulnerable to attacks.

Encounter ✦ Weapon
Standard Action — **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity or Charisma vs. Will
Hit: 1[W] + Dexterity or Charisma modifier damage, and the target grants combat advantage until the end of your next turn. You can make a Thievery check to pick the target's pocket as a free action.
Level 13 Swap: 2[W] + Dexterity or Charisma modifier damage.
Level 23 Swap: 3[W] + Dexterity or Charisma modifier damage.
Effect: You shift 1 square after the attack.

Thief Expert

Prerequisite: 8th level, trained in Thievery

Benefit: You can swap one 6th-level or higher utility power you know for the *thief's getaway* power.

Thief's Getaway — Thief Utility 6

You can wriggle out from a tight situation to make good your escape.

Encounter
Move Action — **Personal**
Effect: End a grab or the slowed, immobilized, or restrained condition. Then you shift 1 square.
Level 16 Swap: You shift half your speed.
Level 22 Swap: You shift your speed.

Thief Specialist

Prerequisite: 10th level, trained in Thievery

Benefit: You can swap one 9th-level or higher daily attack power you know for the *guileful swipe* power.

Guileful Swipe — Thief Attack 9

You step inside your enemy's reach to deliver a swift slash, step away to slash again, and step away once more to make off with your foe's prized possession.

Daily ✦ Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** 1
Target: One creature
Attack: Dexterity or Charisma vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] damage.
Level 19 Swap: 3[W] damage.
Level 29 Swap: 4[W] damage.
Miss: You shift to any square adjacent to the target.
Effect: You shift up to 4 squares to any square adjacent to the target, and during this shift can move through the target's space. You can make a Thievery check as a free action to pick the target's pockets. Make a secondary attack against the same target.
Secondary Attack: Dexterity or Charisma vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] damage.
Effect: You can shift a number of squares equal to your speed.

Thug

"There's a time for talk and a time for hurt. What time do you think it is now?"

If thieves are all finesse and misdirection, thugs are brute force, as direct as a fist in the mouth. Thugs travel in criminal circles, but instead of a delicate hand to pluck a purse from an unsuspecting target, the thug confronts its foe, beats him up, and takes what it wants. There's little romance to what the thug does, but few can deny the effectiveness of their tactics.

The only thing you want to impress in your enemies is that you mean business and if they don't do as you want them to, they're going to pay. Being a thug doesn't necessarily mean being a bully. Thugs can be enforcers, bodyguards, or local heroes after standing up to a cruel constable. Similarly, a thug doesn't have to be a hulking monster: Some of the best thugs use threats and intimidation to get their way. Whatever you decide, you cast a long shadow over your enemies, making them think twice before facing you.

Thug Novice

Prerequisite: 4th level, trained in Intimidate

Benefit: You can swap one 3rd-level or higher encounter attack power you know for the *pommel strike* power.

Pommel Strike — Thug Attack 3

Your well-placed strike leaves your enemy reeling and vulnerable to your allies' attacks.

Encounter ✦ Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature granting you combat advantage
Attack: Strength or Charisma vs. Fortitude
Hit: 1[W] + Strength or Charisma modifier damage, and the target is dazed until the end of your next turn. If the target takes damage from an attack while it is dazed from this attack, it also falls prone.
Level 13 Swap: Increase the damage to 2[W] + Strength or Charisma modifier damage.
Level 23 Swap: Increase the damage to 3[W] + Strength or Charisma modifier damage.

Thug Expert

Prerequisite: 8th level, trained in Intimidate

Benefit: You can swap one 6th-level or higher utility power you know for the *thug's menace* power.

Thug's Menace — Thug Utility 6

You exude such menace, your enemy thinks twice about attacking you.

Encounter ✦ Fear
Immediate Reaction **Personal**
Trigger: You are hit or missed by an attack
Effect: You gain combat advantage against the triggering attacker until the end of your next turn. You do not gain this bonus against attacks from creatures immune to fear.

Thug Specialist

Prerequisite: 10th level, trained in Intimidate

Benefit: You can swap one 9th-level or higher daily attack power for the *opportunistic shove* power.

Opportunistic Shove — Thug Attack 9

Seeing an opening, you smash your enemy in a vulnerable area to send it sprawling.

Daily ✦ Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature granting you combat advantage
Attack: Strength or Charisma vs. Fortitude
Hit: 1[W] + Strength or Charisma modifier damage.
Level 19 Swap: 3[W] + Strength or Charisma modifier damage.
Level 29 Swap: 4[W] + Strength or Charisma modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, the target provokes opportunity attacks from you whenever it stands up from prone. In addition, until the end of the encounter whenever you hit the target on your turn with a melee attack, you also knock the target prone.

About the Author

Robert J. Schwalb is an award-winning game designer whose more recent work can be found in *Martial Power™ 2*, *Draconomicon™ 2*, and *Primal Power™*. Robert lives in Tennessee.

Genesis of a Monster

By Peter Schafer and Chris Young
Illustrations byHoward Lyon

We do a lot of tweaking at the Wizards of the Coast offices. We want our books to be perfect and know they never will be—but we can do our best. In this article, we explore the creation and development of the mithral dragon, introduced in *Draconomicon 2*.

The process begins with the designer working from the outline. The outline said the following about the dragon:

Mithral dragons are driven by prophecy and oracular visions, some of which might bring them into conflict with PCs who could be destined to cause some great problem elsewhere.

Dragon	Mithral
Role	Skirmisher
Setting	Air, Astral
Breath Weapon	Radiant, Fear
Personality Snapshot	Mystic, prophetic, bound to destiny; new take on the radiant dragon

This becomes a series of dragon stat blocks (ranging upward in age), the surrounding text for the monster entry, and a mash of other pages dealing with the mithral dragon throughout the book.

When the authors are finished with the book, it moves on to development, which looks over the entire work for mechanical strength. In this case, we'll take a close look at what development did to the mithral dragon.

CY: A couple things here. I talked with Rich Baker, the lead designer on this book, at great length about this dragon. In fact, I kind of pestered him about it. Many times. And then some more. I wanted this dragon to be super cool, since it was set from the get-go to be the most powerful dragon we've designed so far (with the obvious exception of some of the unique baddies—you know, like Tiamat). We also wanted the dragon to have strong ties to the Astral Sea. I'm thrilled with the final version of the dragon. The original design intent was preserved and strengthened, but the monster was made easier to run overall. Nice work, Peter!

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ORIGINAL

Young Mithral Dragon **Level 11 Solo Skirmisher**
Large natural magical beast (dragon) XP 3,000

Initiative +13 **Senses** Perception +9; darkvision
HP 550; **Bloodied** 275; see also *bloodied breath*
AC 28; **Fortitude** 23, **Reflex** 27, **Will** 25
Resist 15 radiant
Saving Throws +5
Speed 8, fly 10 (hover), overland flight 12; see also *dimension leap*
Action Points 2

Bite (standard; at-will) ✦ **Radiant**
Reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and ongoing 5 radiant damage (save ends).

Claw (standard; at-will)
Reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.

Breath Weapon (standard; recharge ⚄ ⚅) ✦ **Radiant**
Close blast 5; +14 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 5 radiant damage, and the target is blinded (save ends). *Miss:* Half damage, and the target is not blinded.

Bloodied Breath (free, when first bloodied; encounter) ✦ **Radiant**
The dragon's breath weapon immediately recharges, and the dragon uses it immediately.

Dimension Strike (standard; at-will) ✦ **Teleportation**
The dragon makes two claw attacks against two different targets, and can teleport up to half its speed between each attack.

Dimensional Flurry (standard; encounter) ✦ **Radiant, Teleportation**
Close burst 10; targets enemies; +14 vs. Reflex; the mithral dragon makes a melee attack against up to four enemies within range. Each attack deals 3d6 + 5 damage, and each target takes ongoing 5 radiant damage and is dazed (save ends both).

Io's Wrath (immediate reaction, when an enemy within 5 squares moves more than 3 squares; at-will) ✦ **Teleportation**
The mithral dragon can teleport to a space adjacent to the target, make a single claw attack against that target, and teleport back to its starting position. The dragon can use this ability as long as at least 1 square of open space within range is open next to the target, even if that space would normally be unable to hold a creature of the dragon's size.

Wing Buffet (minor; recharge ⚄ ⚅) ✦ **Teleportation**
Reach 3; +14 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + 6 damage, and the target is pushed 3 squares.

Dimension Leap (move; at-will) ✦ **Teleportation**
The mithral dragon can teleport 10 squares.

Prophetic Guidance ✦ **Radiant**
If the dragon moves at least 5 squares before making an attack, it deals an additional 1d6 points of radiant damage.

Alignment Any **Languages** Common, Draconic, Supernal
Skills Diplomacy +13, History +13, Intimidate +15, Insight +14, Religion +15
Str 18 (+9) **Dex** 23 (+11) **Wis** 18 (+9)
Con 15 (+7) **Int** 16 (+8) **Cha** 16 (+8)

PS: Dragons are traditionally trained in Perception, so one of the first things I did was bump up the dragon's ability to notice things.

PS: Development finished with this book before the shift in philosophy that changed solo monster hit points from five times to four times a standard monster's hit points. It caught up with the book later.

PS: Similarly, the dragon's defenses were dropped to accommodate the new rules about solo defenses.

PS: It never feels right for a dragon to have a weak Fortitude. These are enormous monsters!

CY: Designers are taught that for the most part, if you bump one defense, you should drop another. Sometimes, you can make an exception. I didn't, but that's why we have multiple sets of eyes on everything we design.

PS: Dragon bites are hefty things. We wanted the dragon's opportunity attack to be feared.

CY: When the dragon still had the bonus skirmishing damage, I dropped the damage on all its attacks a little below normal. Removing that ability meant the dragon's attacks could all do a little more.

PS: Likewise, upping the dragon's claw damage interacts well with *dimension strike* to bring the dragon toward an appropriate damage output.

DEVELOPED

Young Mithral Dragon **Level 11 Solo Skirmisher**
Large natural magical beast (dragon) XP 3,000

Inititiative +13 **Senses** Perception +14; darkvision
HP 555; **Bloodied** 277; see also *bloodied breath*
AC 27; **Fortitude** 25, **Reflex** 27, **Will** 25
Resist 15 radiant
Saving Throws +5
Speed 8, fly 10 (hover), overland flight 12, teleport 10
Action Points 2

Bite (standard; at-will) ✦ **Radiant**
Reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 2d8 + 4 damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 radiant damage (save ends).

Claw (standard; at-will)
Reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 2d8 + 4 damage.

Dimension Strike (standard; at-will) ✦ **Teleportation**
The dragon makes two claw attacks against two different targets, and can teleport up to 5 squares before it makes each attack.

Wing Buffet (minor; recharge ⚄ ⚅)
Reach 2; +14 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 6 damage, and the target is pushed 3 squares.

Breath Weapon (standard; recharge ⚄ ⚅) ✦ **Radiant**
Close blast 5; +14 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 4 radiant damage, and the target is blinded (save ends). *Miss:* Half damage.

Bloodied Breath (free, when first bloodied; encounter) ✦ **Radiant**
Breath weapon recharges, and the dragon uses it

Dimensional Flurry (standard; encounter) ✦ **Radiant, Teleportation**
Close burst 10; targets up to 4 creatures; +14 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 4 damage, and each target takes ongoing 5 radiant damage and is dazed (save ends both). After the attack, the dragon teleports to any space within the burst.

Frightful Presence (standard; encounter) ✦ **Fear**
Close burst 5; targets enemies; +14 vs. Will; the target is stunned until the end of the dragon's next turn. *Aftereffect:* The target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends).

Prophetic Defense (immediate interrupt, when attacked; at-will) ✦ **Teleportation**
The dragon gains a +4 power bonus to its defenses against that attack. If the attack misses, the dragon can teleport 6 squares.

Alignment Any **Languages** Common, Draconic, Supernal
Skills Diplomacy +13, History +13, Intimidate +13, Insight+14, Religion +13

Str 18 (+9)	**Dex** 23 (+11)	**Wis** 18 (+9)
Con 15 (+7)	**Int** 16 (+8)	**Cha** 16 (+8)

PS: Reducing *dimension leap* to teleport 10 accomplished the same thing in less space.

CY: And I love this change. I like the increased simplicity, and it makes me feel good to know that we have the technology to give creatures the ability to teleport at will without bulking up their stat block.

PS: Simplicity is the name of the game, especially with solos, who need to do an entire encounter's worth of damage all on their own. For example, check out *dimension strike*. Making the teleport distance on the power a flat number rather than basing it on speed offers protection against the common slowed condition, a useful barrier for a skirmisher.

CY: I like the idea of teleporting skirmishers, especially at high levels, so *dimension strike* was one of my favorite powers from the beginning. *Dimensional flurry* was another one that had me giddy, thinking about this giant dragon bamphing around a battlefield and laying waste to adventurers.

CY: *Wing buffet* was a last-minute addition, based on the fact that all the other big dragons had them. But I like powers that force movement on solos, and especially for the more mobile monsters. It gives them an out to use their mobility-themed powers, and changes the battlefield in a substantial way.

PS: I reduced the damage for *wing buffet*, which brings this attack in line with the rest of the monster. Once again, the loss of the bonus skirmish damage made re-evaluating all the monster's damage lines important.

CY: Rich and I talked quite a bit about the nature of the mithral dragon's *breath weapon*. We were already leaning toward radiant damage due to the Astral connection. It also makes the dragon's breath pretty unique.

PS: Everyone wants a *breath weapon* that does tons of damage, but the blinding effect is potent. Blinding was the perfect choice for the attack, so we had to reduce damage to account for it rather than take it out or weaken it in any way.

CY: *Dimensional flurry* is another power that came out of conversations with Rich Baker. I wanted the dragon to bust out a Nightcrawler-style assault once in a fight, rapidly porting around the battlefield and attacking a different foe each time.

PS: After tweaking the damage, we added the final teleport to any space to help communicate that the dragon was (in our minds) rapidly stepping through portals to attack many enemies, then one more to get away. This overlapped so much with *Io's wrath* that we had to cut one of them, and *dimensional flurry* was the more effective way to get the power across.

CY: I really like the final teleport, so the dragon can pick an ultimate destination that isn't base to base with an enemy. I miss *Io's wrath*, but I also knew going in this was a pretty complex monster. For that reason alone, I don't miss it that much.

PS: Development came to a consensus that the metallic dragons all needed the iconic *frightful presence*.

CY: An ability I deliberately didn't include to avoid complexity. I actually originally designed the dragon to have *frightful presence*, but removed it right before turnover due to length, after a talk with Rich. I'm glad it's back in. *Io's wrath* wasn't sacrificed in vain!

CY: *Prophetic guidance* was intended as a way to give the skirmisher more reason to move around the battlefield. When this book was in design, this was a common trick used on skirmishers to encourage DMs to do this. But as Peter notes, we found other ways to keep the dragon mobile.

PS: *Prophetic guidance* was an effective skirmisher mechanic, but the mithral dragon was already an effective skirmisher, and its native teleport speed made it impossible that it would ever fail to get the bonus damage. Since we were already trimming damage back, another effect would be much easier to include than bonus damage. To preserve the prophetic flavor to the mithral dragon, we changed it to a defensive trick. Most dragons have an interrupt that deals damage in response to a threat; we thought the mithral would be a little more contemplative and would prefer a defensive teleport so it could consider matters.

PS: We take a close look at skills on any monster. It's a constant balancing act between the philosophy that a monster has any skills the DM feels they need and the idea that a monster has skills to paint a brief sketch about its character. We tend toward paucity in skills, leaning toward only Athletics or Stealth if it makes no sense to leave it off, but we sometimes shift back toward the descriptive, especially on creatures the game cares more about. Dragons count.

CY: I thought long and hard about the appropriate skills here. As creatures with prophetic ties and a link directly to Io, Insight felt like a must. It's also a useful skill for a monster to have when you intend it to possibly be encountered in a non-combat situation. History felt natural for similar reasons, as did Religion and Arcana.

PS: Though the abilities are at the bottom, it's useful to check them first. They inform initiative and Perception bonus at the top, and while we're looking, we might as well make sure they're all right.

After this process, editing makes sure the monster reads nice and clean, something we're all grateful for.

About the Authors

Chris Youngs is Managing Editor of D&D Insider.
Peter Schaefer is a D&D Developer.

Freaks & Geeks

Confessions of a Full-Time Wizard

BY SHELLY MAZZANOBLE

illustrations by William O'Conner

Breaking news! Man admits love of fantasy and lives to tell about it!

It's true. His name is Ethan Gilsdorf, and if you don't be believe me you can read all about it in his brand-new book, *Fantasy Freaks and Gaming Geeks: An Epic Quest for Reality Among Role Players, Online Gamers, and Other Dwellers of Imaginary Realms*. I met him when he came through Seattle on his book tour. Naturally he jumped at the chance to visit Wizards and meet some R&D staffers. And naturally he was a bit disappointed that our offices are a well-lit warren of cubicles and copy machines as opposed to a dank, damp labyrinth with moats and draw bridges. Too bad we didn't show him the second floor.

Ethan's book, as you can surmise, speaks about his past life as a gamer. He grew up playing D&D, and like many, has fond memories of that time. But also like so many, "real life" -- college, girls, a quest for popularity -- stepped in, and Ethan didn't want to be a "geek" anymore. That's when he gave up gaming.

Years later Ethan found himself watching The Lord of the Rings trilogy and to no one's surprise, he loved it. In fact, he loved it so much that he started thinking about his past life as a fantasy freak and why he gave it up in the first place.

Partially an attempt to answer that question, and partially to discover what being a fantasy freak and gaming geek means to others all over the world, is what inspired Ethan to write his book. I won't give away his discoveries, but I will tell you that it inspired my own quest to discover the root of "geekiness" and who decides what qualifies as geeky. Who says one hobby is geekier than another? And most importantly, who decided being a "geek" is bad?

A "geek" is defined as:

1: *a carnival performer often billed as a wild man whose act usually includes biting the head off a live chicken or snake.*

Umm ... I've seen a lot of strange things around the office but I've never seen that.

2: *A person often of an intellectual bent who is disliked.*

Disliked for being smart? Maybe in fifth grade.

3: *An enthusiast or expert, especially in a technological field or activity, or tabletop roleplaying game aficionado.*

OK, maybe I added that last bit, but I think it's pretty safe to take some liberties here and expand the definition to include D&D. If being knowledgeable and passionate about something makes you a geek, just think about how many geeks you know. Gardening geeks, cat geeks, celebrity gossip geeks -- I know

someone who is such a cooking geek that she actually created an Excel spreadsheet that tracks every menu she's ever planned. So when someone says, "I loved those parmesan cheese things you served at Jodi's baby shower," she can tell you exactly what they were, where the recipe came from, and even print you a shopping list if you feel compelled to make them yourself. OK, I admit -- that's me. And I'll take your geek moniker gladly and caramelize it and smother it with the perfect béchamel sauce.

Now let's talk about hobbies. By definition a hobby is "a pursuit outside one's regular occupation engaged in especially for relaxation." We've all got them, whether it's baking, baseball, or baccarat. It's interesting how some hobbies are perceived as acceptable while others are better left alone like that oddly intense cousin we -- never mind.

My friend James is a casual poker player who is reluctant to admit poker is a hobby because, as he puts it, "poker isn't geeky."

"Well at least we don't spend the day pretending to be somebody else, trying to solve riddles and collect treasure," he went on to explain.

"Actually," I said, "that's exactly what you do."

So in the interest of giving D&D some company at the geek table, I'm calling out the following pastimes, passions, and penchants with the geek tag they deserve. That's right, Mr. Pez dispenser collector. I'm coming after you.

Commissioner of Nerdom

I overhear lots of strange conversations around our office -- everything from debates about what kind of character Batman would be if he played D&D to which of the companions from *The Lord of the Rings* would be the sole survivor if a curse by a mind flayer caused them to turn into cannibals. Probably similar to the conversations in your office, right?

And yet, there was one conversation I overheard recently that I find the most odd. It went something like this:

"Dude, I'll never play Michael Vick! I only took him so I could keep him off the field the whole season."

"No loss, man. Even with the Wildcat, his production won't make him worth even a spot start."

"Doesn't matter. I'm doing a service to society by keeping him benched, so no one is tempted if McNabb goes down."

"But man, good call playing Brett Favre against the Packers! He's got something to prove against his old team. Remember how many TD passes he threw when his father died?"

Say what? Since when did we start tracking points in D&D? And who the heck would name their character Michael Vick?

These guys were clearly talking fantasy. Fantasy football, that is. The funny thing was the way they were talking. Like fantasy had nothing to do with it. I absolutely believe that guy I overheard thinks he's controlling Michael Vick's fate.

You know these guys too. Week after week they obsess over their line-ups. They're constantly checking their stats and debating their draft strategies or weekly pick-ups. Maybe you're that guy or girl. Hey, it's cool. No judgments here. In fact, that's my point. Fantasy football is practically mainstream these days and yet ... it's fantasy.

I know plenty of fantasy sports aficionados. In fact, I grew up with one. My brother gave me my own fantasy hockey team one year for my birthday and then proceeded to use me as his team's farm team by hacking into my account and issuing illegal trades between us.

I asked him if he'd ever consider playing a game like D&D.

"Hell no," he answered. "I don't like fantasy." His fantasy hockey team has a logo, a mascot, and a theme song.

"Really?" I asked. "Because last time I checked, you managed a chain of floor covering stores in Upstate New York, not a six-time Stanley Cup championship hockey team who happen to have the highest merchandising sales in your fake league. It's fantasy. Like D&D."

"It's nothing like **Dungeons & Dragons**," he argued. "We're not pretending to kill trolls or dress up in costumes." By the way, I'm willing to bet my favorite pair of shoes that he was wearing a New York Islanders jersey when he said this.

"Besides, liking sports doesn't make you a geek," my brother went on.

"Says who?" I asked. He's like the national historian for the New York Islanders.

"What was Billy Smith's highest save percentage?" I asked.

"91.1%," he answered without missing a beat. "1974-75 season. Why?"

Geek Scale Rating 4 out of 5

Calling All Wizard Wannabes

This will come as a shock to some of you, but fantasy walks among us. In public. In broad daylight! It's no longer resigned to basements and knights and kelly green dragons with loopy grins. In fact, it's so embedded in mainstream culture people don't even know they're interacting with it.

I have several friends who are gaga for the new Battlestar Galactica or Orlando Bloom's elf ears or debunking Lost's conspiracy theories but claim they have no interest in fantasy. A fine example of this is my good friend Roxy. She's married to a hardcore gamer and yet still manages to remain relatively blasé about his hobby.

"I'm not into swords and goblins and all that," she said. "Besides, if I'm going to spend that much time in front of a computer screen, it better culminate with UPS bringing lots of boxes to my door."

She is, however, into Harry Potter. I know, right? Like *really* into Harry Potter. Not only has she seen all the movies multiple times and finishes the books 36 hours after they're released, but she goes to those midnight release parties ... and not just to get the book. She stays for the craft session where she fashions a construction paper wizard hat and wand, then wears it to work the next day, unabashedly leaving a trail of blue and white glitter from the copier to the mailroom back to her desk.

"So you know," I said to her one day over coffee, "if you played D&D, you could actually be a wizard. Like Harry."

"Oh, I could never play D&D," she said, waving me off. "I'm not into fantasy."

"Really?" I asked her. "You know Harry Potter isn't a memoir, right?"

Geek Scale Rating: 3 out of 5

Armchair Rock Stars

OK, this one I've never understood. I have never met a Rock Band aficionado who is shy about waving his or her freak flag. In fact, if they're within 70 feet of their consoles, it's game on. Grab a fake bass and join them on their quest for a Grammy.

Sure Rock Band is fun. I've even been known to *sing* while playing before, and that hasn't happened since I was a melodic blue bird in my second grade play. But come on! I'm talking about grown ups who don fake mini-instruments and rock out in their PJs whenever Law & Order goes to commercial. *That's* not geeky?

And it's not just Rock Band geeks. It's any uber video and computer game geeks. We probably all have that friend who can hijack a dinner by telling everyone about his latest heroic deed in front of the console. (If you don't have that friend, that means you *are* this person and maybe you should wait until after dessert to start dishing.)

I've made it a rule to never meet at my friend Mario's place before a dinner reservation or a movie or anything with a time restriction for fear I'll be roped into a two-hour live demonstration of just how cool the graphics are on his game of choice. And yet when I interject a D&D anecdote ("Last night in D&D, while Tabitha was already suffering ongoing necrotic damage, she got caught in the line of fire when a troglodyte pinned her to the ground with a javelin through her boot! Can you imagine? Right through her boot!") I'm usually met with blank stares or the usual "Oh that's right. You work *there*."

When I asked my friend and avid computer gamer, Andy, why his genre of choice didn't get as much geek flack as D&D, he said it was because, "D&D is geeky."

"At least with D&D we're talking to people in the same room with us," I said. "And without a stupid headset attached to your face."

Andy is for sure a geek. Not sure if he's the pot or the kettle.

Geek Scale Rating: 5 out of 5.

Inspector Gadget

Mario, the video gamer, is also a huge gadget geek. If it has a battery, a plug, or a solar panel, he owns one. He's our own personal version of consumer reports, giving his friends a full review of all the newest toys and letting us know which ones are worth saving your pennies for. He's also what I would label a "fashion geek." So while he's taking apart his iPhone and putting it back together just for fun, he's doing so in Prada shoes and a John Varvatos tie. And for that, society will grant him a geek pardon.

I was at a friend's house for dinner recently where five out six of the guests had iPhones. All it takes is one person mentioning the latest cool app they downloaded for everyone else to run for their coats and purses and download said very cool app to their phones immediately. I am no exception.

While our labor-intensive kseksu bidawi got cold on our plates, we embarked on an hour-long tour of the latest iPhone apps, which of course led to favorite YouTube videos, which inevitably leads to home

movies of our pets. The one guy without an iPhone (who sadly was the one who labored over the kseksu bidawi) left the table (presumably to find some real friends who would appreciate his cooking) calling us all a bunch of tech geeks and few other choice words. *Geek Scale Rating: 3 out of 5.*

Fair Play

When I was seven, I had the most bitchin' sticker collection. I kept them in a battered photo album, broken out into categories such as *puffy, scratch and sniff, animals (other)*, and *animals (dogs)*.

I wasn't kidding about the Pez dispenser collectors. Or the David Cassidy photo collector, or the belly button lint collector (no joke -- I Googled it.) Look at your neighbors a little closer, will you? You never know what they have buried in the burrows of their garages.

I saw some of these collections live when I went to the Western Washington Fair this year for the first time. I got a ShamWow after watching the live demonstration. (I'm also an "infomercial geek." Or maybe that would be "sucker?") Anyway, I was surprised and delighted by the different collections people were willing to display. The *Star Wars* paraphernalia, the Tony the Tiger memorabilia, and yes, the Pez dispensers all encased in a glass display for my viewing pleasure. Everything was ranked in this place. It was more critical than a Joan Rivers hosted red carpet event, which leads me to believe "judging" is also a popular hobby.

And the collectors have nothing on the canning exhibitors. You haven't lived until you see the Yellow Brick Road or the Wild West recreated with nothing but dried beans and pickled beets. It's pretty amazing but obviously time consuming. Remember *that* the next time you have to decline an invitation because you've got your weekly D&D game. Imagine having to explain you're too busy growing a gourd that resembles Judy Garland's profile.

Geek Scale Rating: 5 out of 5. The list goes on, but I can't because I'm on a deadline. Who's to say one hobby is geekier than another? By definition we're all a bunch of geeks. Cooking geeks, wine geeks, romance novel geeks -- you might not think any of the above hobbies are geeky just like someone probably doesn't think what you do is. And if someone *should* mock your D&D game, tell them you can't hear them because you just cast *cone of silence*.

Then again, maybe you should just laugh it off.

About the Author

Shelly Mazzanoble highly recommends Barefoot Contessa's parmesan black pepper crackers from the episode "Bed & Breakfast," which originally aired March 3, 2007, on Food Network.

Metallic Dragons

BY BART CARROLL & STEVE WINTER

It's true that the D&D game is metal, but in this case we're referring to the latest *Draconomicon* hitting shelves this month. *Draconomicon: Metallic Dragons* follows last year's *Draconomicon: Chromatic Dragons*. Considering the name of the game, all things draconic are dear to our hearts, but this month we're limiting our focus to metallic dragons—and where they differ from chromatics.

The distinction between dragons based on the color or metallic composition of their scales seems fairly unique to the game. Certainly many dragons of fantasy and literature are noted for their color; predominantly red, as popularly depicted everywhere from *The Hobbit*'s Smaug (albeit gem-encrusted) to the *Book of Revelations*. Still, other dragons are equally noted for their iron scales, such as Tharagavverug, the dragon-crocodile of Lord Dunsany's story, *The Fortress Unvanquishable, Save for Sacnoth*: "And the hide of his back is of steel, and his under parts are of iron; but along the midst of his back, over his spine, there lies a narrow strip of unearthly steel."

Outside the game, dragons are not so much defined by their scales as they are described by them; within the game, however, the two sides have long been opposed.

In the Beginning...

It would seem that from the earliest editions, a dichotomy was put into place, forever separating dragons into two camps. In one, we find the chromatics—starting in 1st Edition with the white, black, blue, green, and red. In the other, we have the metallics—brass, bronze, copper, silver, and gold.

Before the game's current edition, the major difference between these two camps (aside from the hue of their scales, of course) concerned their alignment. Chromatic dragons were evil, metallics were good. That split played an enormous role in the *Dragonlance Saga*, in which the metallic and chromatic dragons squared off against one another in a war that shook the world of Krynn to its foundation and demonstrated the profitability of game-related fiction.

In 4th Edition, this split between the two dragon camps somewhat remains. In their reworked origins, the god Io was defeated in battle and then separated into Tiamat (goddess of chromatic dragons; her original title in the 1E *Monster Manual* was, in fact, "chromatic dragon") and Bahamut (god of the metallic dragons, originally called simply "platinum dragon"). Yet, further differences now exist. For one, other draconic categories are listed in the 4E *Monster Manual*: catastrophic, planar, and scourge (dragons also said to have arisen from Io's body). Another, greater difference, is that while Bahamut remains a lawful good deity, metallic dragons are themselves no longer intrinsically good—they're now listed as "unaligned"-and for valid gameplay reasons.

James Wyatt couldn't have argued for this change any better than he did in *Wizards Presents: Worlds and Monsters*: "The place of metallic dragons in the world has been refined. They aren't necessarily good, but they're less destructive and cruel than the chromatic dragons . . . . Monsters the player characters never fight don't need combat statistics. But we rebelled at the idea of putting such monsters in the *Monster Manual*. The alternative was to ensure that every monster was at least potentially an enemy for even the most good and noble player characters. That book is, after all, a catalog of monsters."

Which explains why metallic dragons have long been part of the game, but vastly underappreciated compared to their chromatic counterparts. Almost every D&D player could run down the climate and breath weapon of chromatic dragons as if listing actual laws of nature. But who still remembers this information for metallics? We'll give you a hint: they each had two breath weapons, at least one of which was a specialized gas:

Through the Ages

2nd Edition continued this split, but also saw an obvious design gap to fill—if chromatics were evil and metallics good, then what about neutral dragons? Enter a new category: gem dragons (amethyst, crystal, emerald, sapphire, and topaz—and their own patron god, Sardior). Whereas chromatic dragons breathed deadly substances and metallics possessed a second, gaseous breath, crystal dragons breathed an odd manner of sonic waves, cones of dehydration, or in the case of the amethyst dragon "a faceted, violet loz-

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enge, which it can spit into the midst of its enemies . . . (and) explodes with concussive force." Not exactly the same iconic terror as fiery or acidic breath.

By 3rd Edition, dragons (or "true dragons") initially fell into their two categories, chromatic ("all evil and extremely fierce") and metallic ("all good, usually noble, and highly respected by the wise"). Although still good-aligned in the 3E *Monster Manual*, metallic dragons were now "every bit as aggressive as their evil cousins when threatened or challenged. They also tend to be covetous and proud." Their goodly veneer, it seemed, was beginning to crumble.

Still, while players were no more likely to encounter metallic dragons outside of powerful NPCs, patrons, or occasional allies, 3rd Edition did increase the presence of good-aligned creatures through the *D&D Miniatures* skirmish game. Before the skirmish game's revision, factions were organized according to alignment: Lawful Good, Lawful Evil, Chaotic Good, and Chaotic Evil. Going back to what James stated, good-aligned monsters are generally not relevant to players . . . except when it came to DDM skirmish. Designers needed to fill out the four alignments evenly in order to balance the game and foster a sense of parity between the warbands—and what better good-aligned monsters were there than metallic dragons?

Yet while DDM skirmish promoted metallics as champions of their alignment, this did little to encourage their appearance in the RPG—except for the fact that once a DM has a particular mini, he's apt to find ways to include that monster in his or her game. And even when it came to DDM, it eventually made better design sense to organize factions by creature origin (Civilization, Borderlands, Underdark, and so on) than by alignment.

New Additions, and Returning Foes

Here in 4th Edition, we've come to a terrifying new world wherein metallic dragons are no longer passed fearlessly by or trusted to keep our best interests at heart. They are still dragons—arguably the most iconic, and therefore deservedly powerful entities within the game; creatures to be respected, feared, and very, very rarely engaged.

4th Edition has sought to make this category of dragons more relevant than ever around the table by casting them as unaligned. *Draconomicon: Metallic Dragons* further adds to their category, introducing the orium dragon, as well as formally bringing back the cobalt, mercury, mithral, and steel dragons—the cobalt and *MM2*'s iron dragons originally appearing back in *Dragon* Magazine #170. There, the cobalt breathed a pulse of magnetic energy, slamming away its armor-wearing foes; the iron dragon breathed a cone of superheated sparks. Sadly, the other dragons in that article—nickel, tungsten, and chrome—appear not to have made the cut.

That said, we can well imagine an article around, say, the first of April that takes a look at dragons of other, previously untested elements. The heavy metals are covered; what of the noble gases? Radioactive isotopes? Or even fictional elements?

Until then, we hope the metallic dragons serve your game well. And by that, we mean threaten and occasionally consume your players' characters!

Metallic Dragon	Breath Weapons	Climate
Brass Dragon	leep gas, *fear* gas	sandy desert regions
Bronze Dragon	lightning, repulsion gas	near lakes or seas
Copper Dragon	acid, *slow* gas	arid rocky regions
Gold Dragon	fire, chlorine gas	any, but lairs of solid stone
Silver Dragon	frost, paralyzing gas	mountain peaks and clouds
Platinum Dragon (Bahamut)	cold, sonic vibration, *gaseous form gas*	cold, sonic vibration, *gaseous formtheeast wind*

About the Authors

It is possible that **Bart Carroll** is a relative of the beholder, for there are remarkable similarities between the two species. Bart dwells only at great depths of the ocean, floating slowly about, stalking prey. He has two huge crab-like pincers to seize its victims and a mouth full of small sharp teeth. His primary weapons, however, are his eyes. The author has a large central eye which emits a blinding flash of light to dazzle and stun those in its unless a saving throw versus death ray/poison is made. He also has two smaller eyes on long stalks with which he is able to create an illusion; or, acting independently, the small eyes are able to cast *hold person* and *hold monster* spells respectively.

Steve Winter is a writer, game designer, and web producer living in the Seattle area. He's been involved with publishing the D&D game in one form or another since 1981. Tiny people and monsters made of plastic and lead are among his favorite obsessions.

Here's How to Write for LFR!

BY CHRIS TULACH

illustrations by Eric L. Williams

I've been asked many times over the past few months how a prospective writer can get an adventure published through Wizards of the Coast. If you're new to writing adventures for Wizards, there are basically two avenues you can follow, and they're not mutually exclusive. You can either submit a proposal to *Dungeon*, our online magazine, or you can submit a proposal to the Living Forgotten Realms campaign staff. The two processes are similar but some of the methods and specific steps are different. Let the veil of mystery be parted, and learn how you can turn your idea into an adventure that thousands of gamers the world over will enjoy!

Why Write for LFR?

Writing an adventure for Living Forgotten Realms can be a very rewarding experience, as you'll not only get the thrill of knowing (and reading about) people all over the world playing your adventure, but it's also a great way to "break into" getting more substantial projects from Wizards down the road. In addition, you'll have the benefit of making contact with the Living Forgotten Realms staff, who may decide to involve you in future projects where you'll write to a specified adventure outline for future distribution.

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Dispelling Confusion

If you're not in the know about Living Forgotten Realms, you should head to the webpage for information on the program. You also may want to check out the LFR Community page. Despite what you may think, you don't need an intimate knowledge of the Realms or of the Living Forgotten Realms campaign to write for it. All that's really needed is a good knowledge of 4th Edition adventure writing strategies, willingness to follow rules and guidelines, and a great idea that you can articulate into a fun-filled, four-hour play experience.

Another common misconception is that writing for LFR involves you spending your valuable time writing without compensation. That's not the case. You are paid for your work -- which means there is an expectation of professionalism when your work is reviewed and edited by the LFR and Wizards staff.

Getting Started

There are two ways in which you might get involved in a writing project for LFR: either you make a proposal to the campaign staff, or you solicit availability as a writer to work on an existing outline. In either case, you'll want to do the following before you contact the staff.

Before you do anything else, read the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. This book is essential to understanding how to create intriguing 4th Edition encounters and adventures. You might also want to pick up *Dungeon Master's Guide* 2 as well. There's tons of great advice in there, and the skill challenge section in particular is quite enlightening.

Download the Living Forgotten Realms Writer's Guidelines from the Events Downloads page. Read it thoroughly. There's a lot of information crammed in there on specifics of style and game mechanical concerns for Living Forgotten Realms. Writing for LFR is a bit different from writing for your home game or for *Dungeon*, as you're writing for a shared-world game that plays out adventures in 3.5- to 4-hour sessions. The Writer's Guidelines address these differences in detail.

Write out a short introduction about yourself, including any writing and D&D experience you have. This doesn't need to be a history of your involvement in the game but should clearly communicate in a few sentences where you're coming from and why you'd like to write for us. Hang onto your introduction; you'll need it when you contact the LFR staff.

Make a Pitch or Work on Demand?

If you have a great idea to pitch, start jotting down notes and a short summary, following the guidance presented in the reading material listed above. This will form the core of your pitch to a writing director for the campaign. If you have more than one idea, that's great. Write each one concisely (keep it to a paragraph or so) in preparation for contacting the LFR staff.

Alternatively, if you'd rather be given an outline and work to it, you can move on to the next step, keeping in mind the valuable information you've learned from the DMG and Writer's Guidelines.

Contacting the Staff

After you've read through the materials above and (possibly) developed a pitch, you'll want to get in touch with our campaign staff. A listing of the LFR campaign staff can be found at the LFR Community page. You'll want to get in touch with the appropriate point-of-contact first; they will get connect you with the writing director (unless the writing director you want is contactable).

If You're Making a Pitch: Choose the contact person appropriate to the setting of your adventure, not based on your geographic location. If you don't see a specific Forgotten Realms region listed, choose one of the global administrators. They'll review your pitch and reply to your query. If your adventure pitch isn't associated with a specific region, you can send it to a global administrator.

If You're Looking to Work on Spec: Send an email to the point-of-contact appropriate to your specific geographic location. For example, if you live in Georgia, you'd choose the point-of-contact for Aglarond (the Southeast US). Note that this is the exact opposite of what to do when you're making a pitch; the difference is important.

Be Patient: It may take several weeks for the writing director to review your pitch or answer your query. There are a lot of adventures in the queue, and they're all involved in various stages of completion at any given time. If you don't receive a reply back within two to four weeks, you can send your query again.

Be Professional

Once you've been selected, contacted, and have begun the adventure writing process, you will be expected to turn over work on a timely basis.

Sometimes the adventure you're writing will become available within a couple of months from when you complete it; other times, it may be a year or more before it sees distribution. No matter what the case, there will be a deadline for your initial draft and final changes. Make every effort to hit those deadlines; it may impact the adventure's availability later on. Above all, stay in contact with your coordinator! In addition, your adventure will be reviewed by a regional writing director, a global administrator, and the Wizards staff. You have to be open to critique and editing of your adventure, as elements you've submitted may change at any point in the process.

Enjoy the Fruits of Your Labor!

After the final approved draft of your adventure is submitted to Wizards, you will be compensated for your work. Once your adventure releases, check the Wizards Community site and look for feedback from players and DMs. It's always valuable to see how the adventure is received by the community, and it may help you with future writing projects.
Oh, and thanks for writing; we appreciate your hard work!

New Living Forgotten Realms Adventures Releasing this Month

Check out the latest adventure offerings for November!

November 4, 2009

BALD1-6 Brothers in Arms
A frail alliance connects the city of Baldur's Gate to the nation of Elturgard, and when vital information crosses the border without authorization, that alliance is bound to be put to the test. A visiting paladin's moral code clashes with the organization that has kept the city safe for more than a century, and the outcome may be hard to predict. A Living Forgotten Realms adventure set in Baldur's Gate for characters levels 4-7.

CORE1-16 Fragments of a Shattered Mind
In the human bastion of Almraiven, a gifted magical scholar has gone missing. The academy insists she's taken a sabbatical; her friends say that she was on the verge of a major discovery and would never have abandoned her research at such a critical juncture. Can you get to the bottom of this mathematical mystery? A double-length Living Forgotten Realms adventure set in Calimshan for characters levels 11-14.

MINI1-4 Coaxing the Flame
Your discoveries regarding a fire cult operating in the Windrise Ports brings you to the city of Harglast You believe the leader of this cult is in town. Now begins the frenzied race to find him. A double-length Living Forgotten Realms adventure that is part of the Embers of Dawn mini-campaign set in Harglast for characters levels 1-4. It is recommended that you play the Embers of Dawn mini-campaign adventures in sequence with one character for the best enjoyment and play possibilities within the mini-campaign, but it is not required.

TYMA1-6 Troubled Roads
A group of young scholars from Ruinspoke has gone missing in the capital city of Djerad Thymar. Although their academy insists that they are simply on a research trip, their families believe otherwise, and the leader of House Jalt has asked you to help. A Living Forgotten Realms adventure set in Tymanther for characters levels 11-14.

November 11, 2009

DALE1-7 Arts
Isolation can be a boon, but when strange events leave the members of an airborne boarding school for young nobles in High Dale ill, only aid from outside can offer a solution. Can the PCs solve this discretely and in time? A Living Forgotten Realms adventure set in the Dalelands for characters levels 1-4. A part of the "Arts & Crafts" major quest. The other part is DRAG1-7 Crafts. Successfully completing both adventures in any order completes the major quest. This major quest is a prequel to the paragon level "Pain and Suffering" arc, which starts in DRAG2-1 Discomfort.

DRAG1-7 Crafts
Westgate, the City of Coin is a haven for all races and creeds. But now the Docks and Moonside districts hide something more sinister -- an affliction that threatens to spread to all corners of the city if it is not dealt with in its infancy, with madness and agony the result. It is up to the PCs to discover and eradicate the cause. A Living Forgotten Realms adventure set in the Dragon Coast for character levels 1-4. A part of the "Arts & Crafts" major quest. The other part is *DALE1-7 Arts*. Successfully completing both adventures in any order completes the major quest. This major quest is a prequel to the paragon level "Pain and Suffering" arc, which starts in *DRAG2-1 Discomfort*.

IMPI1-6 The Ancient Temple
In Impiltur, the Fraternity of Tharos threatens all good people. When a Fraternal Brother of Tharos learns of an ancient temple, he seeks the relics it may hold to increase his own power and that of the Fraternity. Can you stop him before it is too late for Impiltur? A Living Forgotten Realms adventure set in Impiltur for characters levels 11-14.

November 18, 2009

AKAN1-6 Abeir Eternal
Rumors are swirling in Airspur. A group of genasi is prophesying the defeat of the Abolethic Sovereignty, quoting from the sayings and strategies of Gethani, a legendary resistance leader. Will the age-old hopes of the genasi people be realized -- and are someone's ambitions getting out of control -- or is it some dastardly plot by the aberrant lords of madness? A Living Forgotten Realms adventure set in Akanûl for characters levels 7-10.

EAST1-6 The Fardrop Incident The Crafty Kobold Salvage Company has lost contact with an expedition to the ruined outpost of Fardrop. The mission is simple, but the true situation is far more complicated than the dwarves realize. A Living Forgotten Realms adventure set in the East Rift for characters levels 7-10.

MOON1-6 Black Heart
As if the lycanthropes of Moray, the giants of Oman, and the beasts of Norland were not enough, something evil and dangerous lurks in the dark corners of what used to be the most civilized island of the Moonshaes. Occupied Snowdown has need for heroes, and soon. Choose your friends well and your enemies even better. This is the conclusion of "The Fisherman" major quest. A Living Forgotten Realms adventure set in The Moonshae Isles for characters levels 11-14.

November 25, 2009

CORM1-7 Patronage and Pestilence
A disease has hit the outskirts of Suzail, and the captain of the guard has hired the PCs to provide safe transport for the arriving cure. Unfortunately, everyone else in town wants it just as badly. Can the heroes protect the medicine for the sick and dying, or will the temptation of wealth be too much to pass up? A Living Forgotten Realms adventure set in Cormyr for characters levels 1-4.

WATE1-7 The Missing and the Missed
In a city built on closely guarded secrets, nothing goes unnoticed, including the strange disappearance of some of the town's poorest residents. While some remain indifferent to the plight of the missing, a City Watchman is determined to give justice to those who have nothing else. A Living Forgotten Realms adventure set in Waterdeep for characters levels 4-7.

About the Author
Originally thought to have been raised from a humble Midwestern family, **Chris Tulach** actually fell to Earth in a meteorite-shaped capsule flung from a planet far outside our galaxy. While under the yellow rays of Sol, Chris's nerdity far surpasses that of any normal human. Using this precious gift only for good, he has become the *D&D* Organized Play Content Developer, responsible for the development and deployment of *Dungeons & Dragons* organized play programs. He is also the co-author of *E2 Kingdom of the Ghouls*.

This month, I want to talk about how we're putting a number of big ideas into small, compact, and affordable packages. In the digital arena, we're about to increase the frequency of content by moving to a daily release schedule for Dragon and Dungeon Magazine articles. In the analog world, next year will see the release of a series of small products targeted at specific topics and specific parts of the D&D audience. Let's start with what's coming up for Insiders via the digital magazines.

Big Things in Small Packages

BY BILL SLAVICSEK

Dragon Magazine

November is the first month we'll be rolling out content five days a week (as mentioned in Chris Young's newest editorial). One of the articles in November that we're most excited about is Rodney Thompson's new artificer build. It's the only arcane class currently lacking a third build, and we're proud to roll it out on *D&D Insider*. December follows right on the heels of that article with a follow-up to the release of the assassin, detailing new feats, powers, and ki focus items to expand the options for assassin characters. We're also continuing to explore new ways to expand the rules. In December, we'll feature an article with familiar powers—wizard powers with extra effects if you have a familiar. And in January, we'll be giving warlocks more roleplaying and power options with an article describing what it means to make a pact with a warlock patron.

All this and more is ahead in *Dragon* magazine, with smaller, more focused articles appearing five times a week. This way, we'll be sure to hit you with something you can use, regardless of the class or race you're playing, sometime over the course of each month.

Dungeon Magazine

We're doing the same thing on the *Dungeon* side of *D&D Insider*, presenting more short adventures, more concise dungeon delve-style content, and even some solo adventures for you to try out between game sessions with your group. The new Chaos Scar project continues, as well as Scales of War, and along the way you'll see great Dungeon Master support features (such as a new Demonomicon and the "Ecology of the Mithral Dragon"), and more short adventures more frequently.

New Product Format

When it comes to physical D&D products, the new year introduces a new format designed to provide targeted content at a great price. For players, we introduce the races books. These 32-page softcovers give players more story, more options, and more powerups for the races they're playing, with material applicable to all classes and roles in the game. January sees the release of Dragonborn, followed by Tieflings in June. I'm giving you a peek at the Dragonborn below.
For DMs, we're providing locations in this format—32 pages with a poster map. These products give a DM

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a ready-to-use location to drop into any campaign setting. The first of these, Hammerfast, appears in March. It details the people, places, and events happening in and around this dwarven outpost. In July, look for Vor Rukoth, an ancient ruins that can serve as the basis for countless adventures in any campaign. Now, here's a preview of *Player's Handbook Races: Dragonborn*.

DRAGONBORN

Glory

Winning glory is a driving motivation for many dragonborn adventurers, as well as dragonborn in other walks of life. The dragonborn caravan guard seeks to earn fame by driving off bandits, the dragonborn artisan hopes to gain renown by creating goods known far and wide for their quality and artistry, and the dragonborn adventurer hopes to win glory by slaying terrible monsters, acquiring great treasures, and fighting back the darkness that threatens to swallow the last remnants of civilization.

Some have compared this hunger for glory to a dragon's magnificent ego, and the comparison seems apt. Just as a dragon wants to be known for the size of its hoard and feared for the strength of its breath and claws, so a dragonborn seeks renown or perhaps even notoriety. If there is a difference, however, it lies in the dragonborn's sense of being a representative of a larger group of people.

For most dragonborn, the desire for glory goes beyond a lust for individual renown and recognition. Dragonborn seek glory not just for themselves, but for their clans and their race as a whole. When a dragonborn does glorious things, that individual's clan and indeed the race as a whole wins glory, rising in the esteem of other clans and the other races of the world.

So few dragonborn survive in the world, and they are so scattered, that any given dragonborn might well be the only member of the race known to some number of people. Those people naturally form their opinion of dragonborn in general based on their knowledge of the individual. If a dragonborn does glorious deeds, the people who see them or learn of them attribute that glory to the race as a whole. In this way, dragonborn hope, they can continue to live up to the all-but-forgotten glories of ancient Arkhosia.

That said, some dragonborn are prone to the same egotistical pride that dragons display, and adventurers are perhaps the most susceptible to it. They seek glory, not to elevate the stature of their race, but to command the respect and adulation of others, to amass their own hoards of wealth, perhaps even to strike terror into the hearts of others. Dragonborn who follow Tiamat's path often pair this vainglory with a jealous pride that leads them to sabotage the efforts and accomplishments of those they view as rivals. But even those who claim to follow Bahamut's path sometimes strive to be seen as paragons of justice and honor, their pride blinding them to their own shortcomings. They protect the weak, not because that is what Bahamut commands, but because they desire the praise of those they have saved, and perhaps seek a monetary reward.

PARAGON PATH: NINEFOLD MASTER

"I have mastered a study of magic that was ancient when your kind were barbarians at our feet."

Prerequisite: Dragonborn, any arcane class, Draconic Spellcaster.

In ancient Arkhosia, arcane spellcasters studied the Ninefold Path, a way toward both arcane mastery and spiritual awakening. The steps along the path represent an increasing attunement to the draconic energies in the initiate's being, a practice that unites the study of magic with the innate characteristics of the dragonborn race.

You are a master of the Ninefold Path, on your way toward arcane perfection as the scholars of Arkhosia understood it. Your dragon breath is another spell in your arsenal, and when you use spells that create the same elemental force as your breath, you demonstrate mastery over the magic that powers them.

Ninefold Master Path Features

Breath Expertise (11th level): Your dragon breath power is considered an arcane power belonging to each of your arcane classes. If you are wielding an implement you can use for your arcane powers, you may add the implement's enhancement bonus to the damage rolls for your dragon breath power.

Dragon Breath Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action, you can

also use your dragon breath as a free action, even if you have already expended it in this encounter.

Draconic Resistance (16th level): Choose one damage type you can deal with your dragon breath power. You gain resistance to that damage type equal to 5 + one-half your level.

Dragon Aura Ninefold Master Attack 11

The innate energy of your draconic breath forms a shield around you, pushing your enemies away.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Implement, Zone; Varies
Standard Action **Close** burst 1
Target: Each creature in blast
Attack: Intelligence or Charisma vs. Fortitude
Hit: 3d6 + Intelligence or Charisma modifier damage, and push the target 1 square. The damage is the same type as any type you can deal with your dragon breath.

Countering Breath Ninefold Master Utility 12

As your foe unleashes a blast of elemental power, you release your own, subtly altering your draconic breath to negate your enemy's attack.

Encounter ✦ Arcane
Immediate Interrupt **Close** blast 3
Trigger: An enemy targets you with a close or area attack that deals a damage type you can deal with dragon breath
Effect: Your space and the blast are not considered part of the triggering attack's area of effect.

Dragon Storm Ninefold Master Attack 20

Your exhalation of elemental energy transforms into a swirling vortex of power.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Implement, Zone; Varies
Standard Action **Close** blast 5
Target: Each creature in blast
Attack: Intelligence or Charisma vs. Reflex
Hit: 3d8 + Intelligence or Charisma modifier damage. The damage is the same type as any type you can deal with your dragon breath.
Effect: The blast becomes a zone that lasts until the end of your next turn. A creature that enters or starts its turn in the zone takes 10 damage of the same type as the initial attack's damage. As a move action, you can move the zone 3 squares.
Sustain Minor: The zone persists.

On the other hand, we've also got a bunch of big things in big packages slated for release next year, but I think I'll save that to talk about next month. Until then ...

Keep Playing!

THE HATCHLANDS

For paragon tier and epic tier characters

The Hatchlands loop through the lowest reaches of the Underdark like an endless ulcerated intestine. According to drow legend, the network of pocked, unstable passageways came into congruence with the Far Realm long ago, ever so briefly. That tiny contact warped lifeless matter and flesh alike. Beholders were the abominable result.

Legend of the Great Hatching

Before the height of the empire of Nihilath came the Great Hatching. During this apocalyptic event, the lower depths of the Underdark shuddered and burbled. Vents appeared in its unstable rock, each of them a festering wound in the fabric of reality. The Great Mother, progenitor of the beholders, was born beneath the earth, called into life by the unfiltered, maddening illumination of the Far Realm. She tore herself from an egg that was her first worldly form. The pieces of the Great Mother's shattered shell dispersed throughout the Underdark.

Each shell piece attempted to recall its earlier shape. Most managed to become again what all had once been part of: an egg. However, each piece contained only a fraction of the vigor the original egg possessed. Still, when these lesser eggs hatched, beholders slipped forth from their slimy ruins.

The first beholders were paragons of insanity. They immediately fell into a murderous struggle for supremacy. Most died, though a few proved capable of a hint of self-preservation. These fled the hatching slaughter. They swept through the Underdark, claiming lofty chambers and secure redoubts for themselves.

Alternate Theories of the Hatching

As unyieldingly solitary beings, beholders can't be said to have a culture or a set of common myths. They do seem to be born with a flicker of collective memory about the Great Hatching. The story given here is the most commonly told, both by beholders themselves and by surface world scholars. However,

beholders are notorious theorizers. If prompted, they might be tempted to spout alternate versions of the story. Examples reported by adventures surviving beholder captivity include:

✦ The apocalyptic event that resulted in the Great Hatching was Torog's maddened crawl through the Underdark.

✦ Beholder eggs condensed from the bodily effluvia of Torog, the crawling god.

✦ The Great Mother was summoned by the primordials to destroy Torog, their hated foe.

✦ The Great Mother does not literally exist. She is a personification by foolish early beholders of the Hatchlands' eggs, which itself was an anomalous but entirely natural phenomenon.

✦ The original beholder egg was accidentally created by illithids. When beholders formed from it, they destroyed the illithids. (To accept this story, one must believe the beholders' claim that they caused the downfall of the empire of Nihilath.)

The Hatchlands Today

Lonely, dank, and suffused with an acrid stink of elemental wrongness, the Hatchlands are now home to a few weak beholders. Occasionally, in an aftereffect of the Great Mother's birth, a fragment of her shell condenses into a new pulsing egg.

If threatened, the egg immediately hatches, birth¬ing a completely grown, fully intelligent beholder. Left to its own devices, it develops for a longer period, until it hatches as a higher-level beholder.

The Impulse

No single beholder dares to claim the Hatchlands as its exclusive domain. At rare times, the beholders of the Underdark feel a sick, uneasy feeling deep in their globular bellies. After a period of nauseated confusion, they identify this effect as a call to fellowship from the Great Mother. If they permit themselves to speak of it at all, they ashamedly call this feeling "the impulse." It compels them to abandon their comfortable state of mutual hostility to come together toward a common purpose.

The Hatchlands serves as neutral ground for beholders. Within its confines, they can restrain their instinctive desire to violently establish dominance over all other creatures. Here, they can achieve this feat without the impulse, though they seldom see a reason to do so.

Upon arrival in the Hatchlands, the strongest beholder senses the wishes of the Great Mother. It uses its genius intellect to create a plan to carry out those desires. It then lays out these instructions to the others as they arrive. Vexed by each other's company, the beholders leave as quickly as possible, fanning out to perform their separate roles in the scheme.

Martial Practices

Beyond the exploits for which they're famed, martial adventurers can push the bounds of what is possible for ordinary mortals by mastering challenging techniques called martial practices. Using these rare methods, an adventurer can run for days, swim to great depths, and even create magic items. Although martial practices approach what's possible with rituals, they exist wholly in the realm of martial power.

A martial practice is similar to a ritual. To learn martial practices, you must first have the Practiced Study feat. To use a martial practice, you must then acquire a practice, master it, and perform it. A practice you master must be associated with a skill in which you are trained. The component costs sometimes include healing surges. After you finish performing a practice, you gain its benefit.

Practiced Study

Prerequisite: Any martial class
Benefit: You can master and perform martial practices. You learn one martial practice of your level or lower.

Acquiring Martial Practices

You can learn the rudiments of martial practices from a master or purchase them on the open market. Unless you find the practice as part of treasure, you'll pay something for it.

Learn through Training: Any character who has mastered a martial practice can teach it to you. The instructor can be another player character or an NPC you meet. Training is costly and arduous. Usually, you pay the cost in coins or other treasure. Learning a martial practice costs half the market price if you learn it from another player character. You should assume that you are paying for the supplies needed for training, not for your ally's work and time.

Purchase: If you can find a merchant that deals in rare goods, you can pay the market price of a martial practice to acquire it.

Find in Treasure: You might also find martial practices in the form of ancient manuals hidden away in dusty libraries or haunted castles. Practices contained within these texts offer detailed instructions so that with careful study you can master them. The Dungeon Master deducts the market price of a martial practice you find from treasure you earn.

Mastering Martial Practices

You must master a martial practice before you are able to perform it. To master a practice, you must:

✦ Acquire the martial practice

✦ Have the Practiced Study feat

✦ Meet or exceed the practice's level requirement

✦ Be trained in at least one of the key skills for the practice

✦ Study the martial practice for a total of 8 hours

The studying process differs depending on how you acquired the martial practice. If you acquired it through training, the study period takes place at the same time as acquiring the practice. If you bought or found the practice, the time is spent closely studying the manual and repeating the lessons and steps within the text.

Performing a Martial Practice

The steps to perform a martial practice correspond to the headers of the practice's description. The martial practices don't include action types in their descriptions, but you can infer what type of actions you might take to perform the activities that benefit from the practice.

Time: Martial practices take time to perform. You might have to adopt the right physical and mental state, sweat over a forge to craft an item, or painstakingly camouflage your party's campsite.

Component Costs: Martial practices are strenuous. Unlike rituals, which require only a material component cost, most martial practices require an expenditure of healing surges. This cost reflects the strain on your body and mind.

A few martial practices also require materials to properly perform them. When a practice has a component cost, you must pay the price from your store of treasure, whether you're spending coins, gems, or other valuables. The component cost represents the price of equipment, bribes, and raw materials. You pay the component cost, including both treasure and healing surges, when you complete the practice. If you cannot pay the full cost, the practice has no effect.

Skills: Each practice lists one or more key skills, and you must be trained in at least one of these skills to perform the practice. Some practices also require skill checks to determine your effort's effectiveness. Usually, the practice succeeds regardless of the check result and high results produce the best effects. Unless a practice says otherwise, you make your skill check at the end of its performance. As with rituals, you cannot take 10 on this check.

Effects of a Martial Practice

After you finish performing a practice, you gain its benefit for the practice's duration. Sometimes it's instantaneous: You've learned the information or completed the task. Other times, you gain a benefit for a set amount of time, or you create a permanent object.

Assistance

Typically you must perform the martial practice without help. Any exceptions are noted in a practice's description.

Interrupting a Martial Practice

You can stop performing a martial practice at any point before it's completed without expending any healing surges or component costs. Once you stop, you cannot resume the practice; you must start over again.

Alter Ego

With a little makeup and a bit of misdirection, you can be anyone.

Level: 8 **Component Cost:** 1 healing surge and 50 gp
Time: 1 hour **Market Price:** 275 gp
Duration: 24 hours **Key Skill:** Bluff

You alter your own appearance or the appearance of an ally who is present throughout your performance of the practice. The disguise can alter facial and physical features and appear to modify height and weight by up to 10%. You can also use this martial practice to disguise gender, race, and age.

Make a Bluff check with a +5 bonus. Your result determines the Insight check a creature must make to determine that the person you disguised is not who he or she appears to be.

You can use this practice to impersonate another humanoid. When you interact with a creature that is familiar with the person you're imitating, that creature gains a +10 bonus to its Insight check.

Precise Forgery

Your falsified papers are resistant to even the closest scrutiny.

Level: 5 **Component Cost:** 1 healing surge
Time: 10 minutes **Market Price:** 80 gp
Duration: Permanent **Key Skill:** Thievery

You fabricate papers or documents so you can foist them off as being authentic. You can create forgeries of any kind, including written orders, treasure maps, paintings, manifests, and land grants. Forging a simple document requires 10 minutes. More complex works take as long as the Dungeon Master decides.

At the end of the practice, make a Thievery check. Your check result determines the forgery's quality. Anyone examining the document must succeed at a Perception check equal to your Thievery check to discern the falsehood. You might have to engage in a skill challenge to convince another creature that the document is authentic if the forgery contradicts other documents or orders.

Speech without Words

No language barrier can keep you from communicating.

Level: 3 Component Cost: 1 healing surge
Time: 5 minutes **Market Price:** 50 gp
Duration: 10 minutes **Key Skill:** Diplomacy (no check)

Through pantomime, you communicate with a nonhostile creature you can see, even if it does not speak your language. The creature must have an Intelligence score higher than 3. You can communicate simple ideas and concepts, such as figuring out where a monster went, where one might find fresh water, if there's a safe place to camp, and so on. Conveying complex ideas might require a skill challenge, at the Dungeon Master's discretion.

In Case You Don't Know Him

Bill Slavicsek's gaming life was forever changed when he discovered **Dungeons & Dragons**® in 1976. He became a gaming professional in 1986 when he was hired by West End Games as an editor. He quickly added developer, designer, and creative manager to his resume, and his work helped shape the *Paranoia*, *Ghostbusters*, *Star Wars*, and *Torg* roleplaying games. He even found some time during that period to do freelance work for **D&D** 1st Edition. In 1993, Bill joined the staff of TSR, Inc. as a designer/editor. He worked on a bunch of 2nd Edition material, including products for core **D&D**, *Dark Sun*®, *Ravenloft*®, and *Planescape*®. In 1997, he was part of the TSR crowd that moved to Seattle to join Wizards of the Coast, and in that year he was promoted to R&D Director for **D&D**. In that position, Bill oversaw the creation of both the 3rd Edition and 4th Edition of the **D&D Roleplaying Game**. He was one of the driving forces behind the **D&D Insider** project, and he continues to oversee and lead the creative strategy and effort for **Dungeons & Dragons**.

Bill's enormous list of credits includes *Alternity*®, *d20 Modern*®, *d20 Star Wars*®, *Pokemon Jr.*, *Eberron*® *Campaign Setting*, the *D&D For Dummies* books, and his monthly *Ampersand* (&) column for *Dragon*® Magazine.